‘Start looking for dead bodies,’ Sabaya warns gov’t

STORY BELOW, COLUMN 1

GMA lampooned; media lambasted

HINDI AKO NATAWA

By Dona Pazzibugan

AS EXPECTED, President Macapagal-Arroyo took potshots at the National Press Club during the Gridiron Night on Tuesday.

But her speech,

GMA/A15

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Thursday, May 2, 2002 ★★ 64 pages / 5 sections / vol.17 / no. 143 P15

Security dragnet keeps the peace

RED is the dominant color of protest for sectoral groups demanding the ouster of President Macapagal.
VAL HANDUMON

40,000 march vs GMA in Metro; leaders say cops blocked protesters

By Philip Tubeza and Jerome Aning

PROTEST organizers said as many as 40,000 anti-administration demonstrators took to the streets yesterday, but police authorities said the number was likely only half that total.

Deputy Director General Edgardo Aglipay, chief of the National Capital Region Police Office, said there were some 5,000 demonstrators from Sanlakas and the Bukluran ng Manggagawang Pilipino; about 3,000 from the National Confederation of Labor-Siglo; and eight to 10,000 protesters from the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan and its affiliated groups.

But Bayan organizers said their number had risen to 30,000 late yesterday afternoon, while Chief Supt. Nicanor Pasinos Jr., Western Police Dis-

40,000/A11

Massive show of force raises apprehensions

By TJ Burgonio and Carlito Pablo

“YIELD not an inch of ground.”

This was the instruction that kept the peace on Labor Day. But at what price?

The country’s armed services put on a massive display of force yesterday, casting a nationwide security dragnet that effectively checked peace and order threats and dwarfed anti-administration protests. But the show of force also raised concerns about the possible abuse of civil liberties.

In images and events caught on television and radio, checkpoints turned into barricades, riot police outnumbered demonstrators, and one policeman in plain clothes but with a side-arm was even caught infiltrating a rally on Mendiola Bridge. ***(See story on Page A6.)***

Four battalions of Task Force Libra also stood in reserve, ready to defend the Palace at a moment’s notice.

The police set up controversial checkpoints at the approaches of both the Northern Luzon and South expressways. At the Calamba, Laguna, tollgate, Army troops and Philippine National Police officers stopped more than 2,000 workers and members of militant groups from the Southern Tagalog region from proceeding to the Labor Day protest sites in Manila.

SECURITY/A6

“YOU are the superstar of my life,” the President and movie star Nora Aunor sing a duet to each other at the Araneta Coliseum where the government Labor Day celebration is held and the “great Filipino worker” is hailed as the only superstar.
EDWIN BACASMAS

Stars, door prizes for pro-Gloria crowd

By Carlito Pablo

THOUSANDS of policemen out in full force were the stick; the country’s movie stars and old-fashioned door prizes served as the carrot.

Before President Macapagal-Arroyo arrived at the Araneta Coliseum in Cubao, Quezon City, yesterday, where thousands of workers mainly from the moderate Trade Union Congress of the Philippines had gathered, the Department of Labor and Employment raffled off prizes to keep the laborers happy. Prizes included bread toasters, compact disc players, flat irons, washing machines and even life insurance policies.

When she arrived, the President distributed three checks to finance specific government livelihood pro-

STARS/A11

Erap rally loses its Edsa III punch

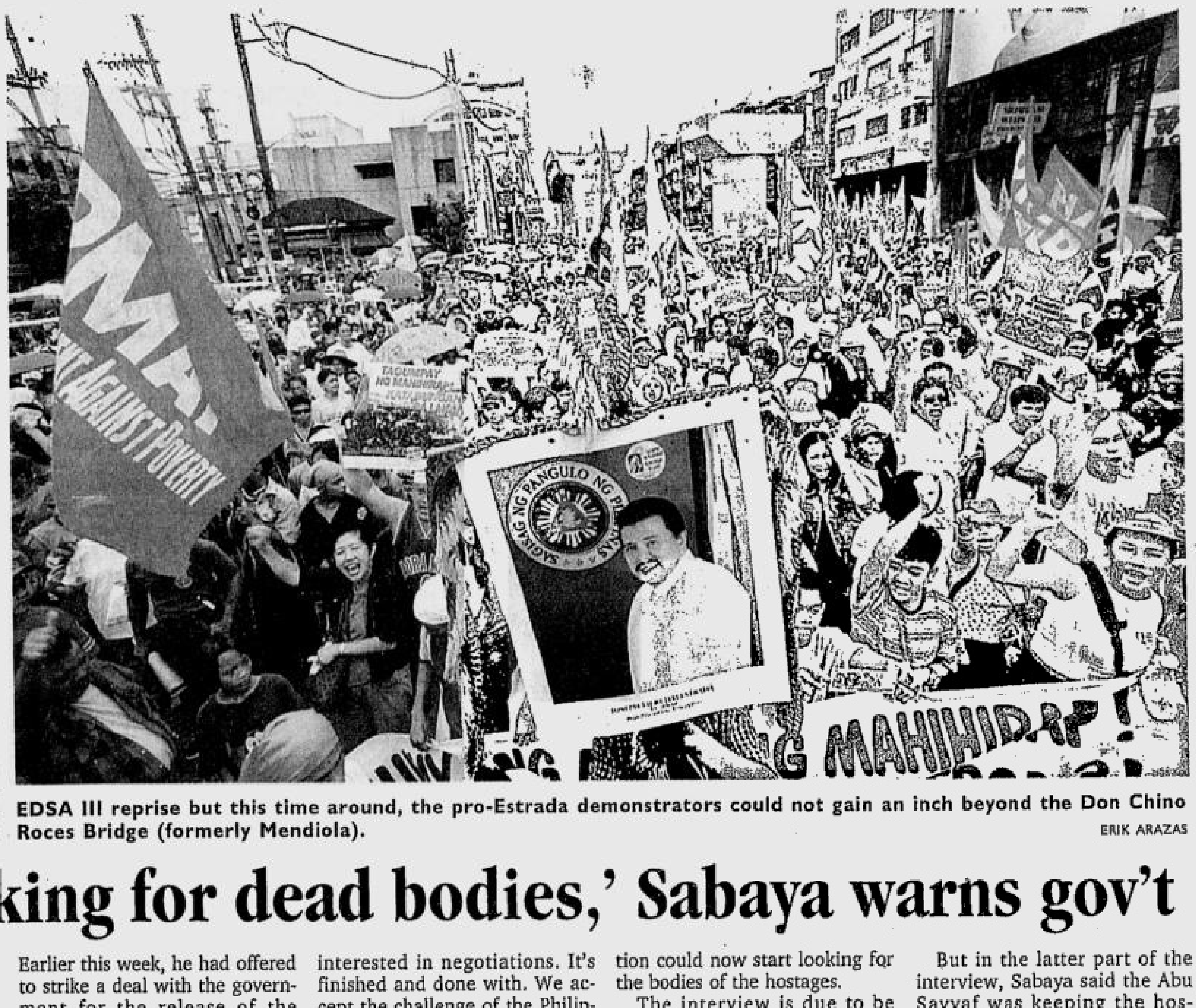
By Volt Contreras and Christian V. Esguerra

JOSEPH Estrada took a break from his usual tirade against the Philippine judicial system Sandiganbayan and marked Labor Day by issuing a warning on forces ostensibly out to “divide” the nation.

The detained ex-President also appealed to both his supporters and the police—who, he said, shared the same economic hardships, anyway—to keep the May Day rallies peaceful. He specifically urged his supporters to air their grievances in peaceful ways.

“We are all victims of our own circumstances and should not be seduced by those who wish to sow violence and divide the Filipino people,” his faxed

ERAP/A15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EDSA III reprise but this time around, the pro-Estrada demonstrators could not gain an inch beyond the Don Chino Roces Bridge (formerly Mendiola).
ERIK ARAZAS

Rosy promises on a May Day of discontent

By Carlito Pablo

THE FOLLOWING are the main points of President Macapagal-Arroyo’s speech before the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines at the Araneta Coliseum in Cubao, Quezon City:

- Tossed to Congress “as priority legislation” to pass a law reducing the controversial power purchase adjustment (PPA) which accounts for the high cost of Meralco’s billing.
- Ordered Energy Secretary Vincent Perez Jr. to work with Congress for the passage of bill

ROSY/A11

Cotabato blast kills 3, hurts 60

By the PDI Mindanao Bureau

COTABATO CITY—Three persons were killed while at least 60 others were wounded when an unidentified man tossed a hand grenade at a Labor Day dance party at Notre Dame Village here last night.

Col. Essel Soriano, Task Force Cotabato chief, said most of the victims of the 9:45 p.m. blast were teenagers and included a 10-month-old baby.

The Associated Press reported that a stampede ensued and the scene at the local hospital

COTABATO/A19

‘Start looking for dead bodies,’ Sabaya warns gov’t

By Julie S. Alipala
PDI Mindanao Bureau

ZAMBOANGA CITY—“Start looking for the dead bodies.”

The terse message to the government was from Abu Sayyaf spokesperson Abu Sabaya.

Sabaya was referring to the fate of the American hostages Martin and Gracia Burnham. Earlier this week, he had offered to strike a deal with the government for the release of the Americans. But President Macapagal-Arroyo said her administration would not negotiate with the bandit group.

“The government spends billions even if we are only a small group. It’s up to them now to look for us. We are no longer interested in negotiations. It’s finished and done with. We accept the challenge of the Philippine government,” Sabaya said during the interview.

In the taped interview with Rey Bayogin, station manager of dxRZ Radyo Agong Zamboanga, Sabaya said because of the government’s rejection of his offer, the Macapagal administration could now start looking for the bodies of the hostages.

The interview is due to be aired today.

“If they want to, then they can start looking for the dead bodies. With the decision of the Philippine government that they don’t want to negotiate with us, we are now closed for any negotiation,” he said.

But in the latter part of the interview, Sabaya said the Abu Sayyaf was keeping the hostages alive.

“Holding the hostages is more advantageous to the group compared to the US$2 million (the amount the Abu Sayyaf was demanding for the release of the Burnhams),” he said.

START/A19

Summit agenda angers Gloria

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo is reported to be very upset over the proposed agenda of the three-day national political summit that starts tomorrow.

A government official said the President has complained that the summit organizers were trying to propose an alternative strategy to the one set forth in her "state of the nation address" and the priorities laid down by the recent national economic summit.

The source, who asked not to be named, said the President blew her top at last week's Cabinet meeting in which a draft six-point agenda for the summit prepared by academic Romulo Neri, director general of the Congressional Planning and Budget Office of the House of Representatives, was presented.

The President was said to have stated that the government would not push through with the summit if the "formula" proposed by Neri would be followed.

The source said Jose Rufino, the presidential political adviser, has been asked to draft a "new agenda" for the summit which will be held at the Manila Hotel from May 3 to 5.

The "All Parties Conference" summit, which is being organized by Speaker Jose de Venecia, will bring together 12 national parties, including the opposition, eight regional parties and 12 party-list groups.

The President is to deliver the keynote speech at the summit which will have the theme, "Modernizing the political institutions of a democratic and prosperous national community."

Internal draft

Neri said what he presented during pre-summit meetings was not a formula but some studies and discussions on the country's socioeconomic and political conditions.

"It was an internal draft. I don't know why it was presented (to the Cabinet meeting)," Neri said.

He said the President could not change the agenda because it was agreed upon and approved by the officials of the major political parties at several pre-summit meetings.

"She can suggest but she cannot impose (an agenda) because the national political summit is really an independent (undertaking)," Neri said.

But he did admit that his presentation of the issues during the pre-summit meetings was meant to be "very strong."

He described how some "problem definitions" were identified such as that one of the reasons why the Philippines has failed to take off is that "we have many policy distortions and our institutions are very weak."

One of the issues that came up was the "domination by the oligarchic elite that may be part of the problem of the whole system."

Distorted policies

He said distorted policies and weak institutions affect poverty and economic growth by making it very risky to invest. This is why the Philippines has a very low investment ration, just 20 percent compared to the 35 to 40 percent ratio in the rest of Asia.

This leads to the corruption that is seen in its impact on the poor: high unemployment, low income, poor education, poor health and low respect for the law.

"We have to cure the whole system that Dr. (Paul) Hutchcroft calls the vicious cycle of capitalism and poor governance," Neri said.

Hutchcroft, a Yale academic who has been studying the Philippines for the past 15 years and is author of a book "Booty Capitalism," was asked to help identify the topics for the summit.

Hutchcroft described the Philippines as an oligarchic state, one which has very powerful business interests which finance elections in order to dominate policies.

Oligarchic

According to Hutchcroft, the Philippines will never grow economically as long as it remains an oligarchic state.

"Sometimes it is better to be a bureaucratic-capitalistic state because the bureaucracy can deliver. But it is hard for an oligarchic state to move because there are two centers of power—the oligarchy and the bureaucracy—neither of which can move the country forward," Neri said.

De Venecia had proposed the political summit to "discuss a common strategy to defeat poverty" in the country and to "remove the political poison in the atmosphere."

The source added that the President's advisers are worried that she would be "compromised" in the summit because of the agreements that might be reached. He could not elaborate.

Housing program doomed, says study

By Arman Nocum

THE ADMINISTRATION is not likely to make major strides toward solving the housing problem, until it does something about the country's robust population growth.

A population and development policy research and advocacy group said Tuesday that the government's revised shelter plan for 2001-04 would result in the construction of only 1.2 million houses, against the projected need of 3.362 million units from 1999 to 2004.

"The (housing backlog) is admittedly huge and far greater than what the government can respond to by itself," the Philippine Center for Population and Development Inc. (PCPD) said in a study. The group is headed by Peter D. Garrucho.

The government has allocated P215.16 billion for its medium-term development plan for shelter. The funding translates to a "supply target" of 300,000 units annually, against the estimated annual need of over 800,000 units.

"Clearly, the demand-supply gap in housing can never be breached as an annual backlog of some 500,000 units continues to accumulate," the PCPD said.

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MAKATI

ROSE PORTEOUS

Hancock widow wants divorce from 4th husband

PERTH, Australia—Philippine-born socialite Rose Porteous, cleared last week of willfully murdering her late husband, iron ore tycoon Lang Hancock, has filed for divorce from her fourth husband, it was reported here Wednesday.

Porteous, 52, had decided to end her 10-year marriage to Canadian-born real estate agent Willie Porteous, the West Australian newspaper said.

She said the relationship had come under pressure from the inquest, brought by Hancock's daughter, Gina Rinehart, and it had been some time since the couple had lived as man and wife.

"I told William last night I was going to give him one last chance, but I spent the night by myself," she was reported as saying.

"I have lived the life of a virgin for the past six years.

"I am a broken woman. The femme fatale in me has died."

Porteous said she was facing a nervous breakdown. "I have not slept for five days, not only because of the inquest, but also because of my marriage problems.

"My body cannot cope any more."

However, she told the paper that she would not ask Porteous to move out of their Mosman Park mansion, which was built by her late husband for her. "I am not going to make a fool out of William. Besides, I cannot afford to live in the house by myself. He can move into another room.

"I don't want another fight. I hope he doesn't come after me for money. We'll have to see what happens."

Porteous, meanwhile, told reporters he was not aware of his wife's actions.

"She's filed for divorce, has she? Oh, well, I've no comment to make."

Last Friday, Western Australian Coroner Alastair Hope ruled that Hancock, one of the country's wealthiest men, was not killed by his wife.

"I do not accept that the death was a homicide," Hope said.

Hancock had died of natural causes, the coroner said, highlighting in his 285-page report that he had been an old man suffering from serious heart and kidney disease at the time of his death.

The inquest was held after strenuous lobbying by Gina Rinehart, who refused to accept police findings that there had been no foul play in her father's death. *AFP*

PLUNDER TRIAL

BIR chief to testify against Estrada

By Michael Lim Ubac

DESIERTO

BAÑEZ

A RANKING Bureau of Internal Revenue official will be the next prosecution witness who is expected to testifv on discrepancies between ex-President Joseph Estrada's declared income and his alleged P4.3-billion wealth.

Ombudsman Aniano Desierto said either BIR Commissioner Rene Bañez or his deputy will take the witness stand at the resumption on Monday of Estrada's plunder trial at the Sandiganbayan.

Desierto said the BIR official will bring documents that would show discrepancies between Estrada's submitted income tax returns and his alleged accumulated wealth from the time he was a senator in 1987.

"The BIR testimony will show that his (Estrada's) income was disproportionate to his true wealth which includes the P3.2-billion Jose Velarde bank account and other assets worth a total of P4.3 billion," Desierto said.

"We are going to show that his tax returns since 1987 never showed he had that much money in his possession," he said.

"If his real wealth was not reflected in his tax returns, then he could not have accumulated it through legal means," Desierto added.

The prosecution believes Estrada used his short-lived presidency to amass wealth illegally through a series of covert criminal acts.

Since the plunder trial started last year, and despite delaying tactics employed by the defense, the prosecution has so far been able to present 11 witnesses.

After Bañez or his subordinate, former Equitable PCIBank trust director Clarissa Ocampo will take the stand.

Ocampo, who will be the 13th witness, is expected to repeat her testimony at Estrada's impeachment trial last year that the then President signed the name "Jose Velarde" to bank documents she had taken to him.

Estrada signed the alias allegedly in the presence also of bank lawyer Manuel Curato and his former chief of staff Aprodicio Lacquian.

The documents authorized the bank to loan money from the Velarde account to an Estrada crony, businessman William Gatchalian.

No new cell for detained Erap leader

By TJ Burgonio

UNLESS he is able to convince the court to transfer him to another cell, the captured leader of the People's Movement Against Poverty (PMAP) will be brought back to the cramped detention cell that he dislikes when he is discharged from the hospital.

Ronald Lumbao, who has been confined at the Philippine National Police General Hospital since Friday for hypertension, has filed a motion with the Manila regional trial court seeking a transfer to another detention cell.

"We can't do anything about that. That's the only detention center that the Intelligence Group has. We have to follow the order of Judge (Teresa) Soriaso to detain him there," said Senior Supt. Leonardo Espina, the PNP spokesperson.

Espina admitted that the Intelligence Group's detention center was not designed for prisoners but for detainees.

But he stressed that it was for the court to determine whether Lumbao should be transferred to another detention cell.

"We can't decide on that. It is the courts that decide where he should be detained. We just follow what the court orders us to do. If the court orders us to transfer him, we'll transfer him," he said.

In the motion filed by his lawyer on Monday, Lumbao likened his detention cell at the headquarters of the anti-terrorist Task Force Sanlahi in Camp Crame to "a dungeon" and sought to be transferred to the cell of the Anti-Carnapping Task Force.

His wife Liza has described the cell as cramped and dark. She complained that her husband was being detained in a cell next to that of suspected Indonesian terrorist Fathur Rohman al-Ghozi.

Lumbao, who is facing rebellion charges for allegedly instigating the May 1 siege of Malacañang last year, was captured last week after almost a year of hiding.

He was rushed to the hospital on Friday night after his blood pressure shot up.

Doctors said on Monday that he would stay there for another week for further observation.

Yesterday, Lumbao's blood pressure slightly went up to 150/100 from 150/90 on Tuesday, according to Espina who said he was just waiting for the hospital authorities to say when Lumbao can be returned to his detention cell.

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Legarda seeks Senate probe of military leaks

By Cynthia D. Balana

SENATE Majority Leader Loren Legarda yesterday sought a Senate inquiry into what she called the indiscriminate release of "unverified" intelligence reports by the military and the police that were aimed at discrediting key political figures, particularly senators.

In an interview with reporters, Legarda said she was speaking from her own experience as a "victim of fabricated intelligence reports" which were allegedly intentionally leaked to the media in order to destroy her reputation.

Press reports early this week quoted a military intelligence report as saying that Legarda and her husband had met with Abu Sayyaf members in Metro Manila and had paid P2 million in ransom for the release of television reporter Arlyn de la Cruz.

Top Armed Forces officials, however, disowned the report after Legarda exploded in anger over it.

The senator challenged the military to substantiate the report and explain how unverified intelligence reports were processed in the AFP's general headquarters and why these were being leaked to the media.

Legarda cited Senators Edgardo Angara and Panfilo Lacson as other "victims" of unverified intelligence reports.

Last Tuesday, Angara claimed that his aides had discovered a plan by Malacañang to implicate him and Lacson in a supposed destabilization plot in time for yesterday's May 1 celebration.

He claimed that Malacañang would use the "trumped-up charge" to order his and Lacson's arrest.

Legarda said she did not believe that "responsible opposition leaders like Angara and Lacson" would be involved in a destabilization plot.

She said the "claims and fears of apprehension" of Angara were valid and had a basis.

"I'm questioning the so-called intelligence, unverified report. What are they doing? Are they trying to pin down each senator and they are using the military intelligence report to discredit us or to impugn... our reputation?" Legarda asked.

She said she would call for a Senate "question hour" in which military officials, including those from the intelligence sector, would be made to answer questions from the senators.

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NEWSBRIEFS

HEALTH PASS

President Macapagal-Arroyo receives an enlarged health insurance card from GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) president and chief operating officer Robert A. Ingram (third from left) during a recent courtesy call in Malacañang. During the visit, GSK Philippines announced that it would provide health insurance coverage to some 10,000 urban poor families in partnership with Philippine Health Insurance Co. (Philhealth). Also present during the courtesy call were (from left) GSK Philippines president and managing director Amado Tadena, GSK Asia Pacific regional director Andrew Witty, Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit, and GSK Phils. vice president Noel Isberto.

Gordon selling RP in S. Korea

TOURISM Secretary Richard Gordon is in South Korea to lead a 40-man delegation to that country's most influential and longest running travel set May 1 to 4.

Gordon said the Koreans ranked third among visitor arrivals in the country with 26,437 arrivals for January, an almost 49-percent increase from the same period last year.

Last year, Korean market registered an 18.9-percent growth with 207,957 in 2001 compared to 174,966 in 2000. Gordon said the increase was brought about by increased travel by Koreans due to their booming economy.

He added that the arrival of Koreans to the country is proof that the Philippines remains an attractive place for tourists and businessmen.

Dentists' induction Sunday

OROSA

SALCEDO

THE PHILIPPINE Section of the International College of Dentists will hold its 36th Annual Convocation and Banquet on Sunday, May 5, at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel in Mandaluyong City.

The annual event, which starts at around 6 p.m., will be highlighted by the induction of Dr. Luis F. Orosa, the general chairperson and incoming president for the year 2002-2003. He will be inducted into office by Ombudsman Aniano Desierto, the keynote speaker.

Also to be inducted are the other incoming officers. They are Drs. Antonio A. Baldemor, president-elect, 2003-2004; Ermelinda S. Galang, vice president; Elizabeth C. Carrasco, secretary; Ma. Teresa J. Amador, treasurer; William A. Sy Ting Pang, auditor; Eliza G. Puzon and Fatima S. Dizon, directors; and Aida H. Salcedo, immediate past president and ex-officio.

Five nominees will be accepted as new fellows during the investiture rites. They are Drs. Amalia V. Angeles, Vimbee N. Book, Roberto M. Tajonera, Rosemary C. Youngchan and Luis D. Uy.

Nine fellows will be conferred life membership while the Degree of Master will be awarded to Fellow Diampo J. Lim. Honorary fellowship will be conferred on Francisco M. Morales, AVP, Professional Relation Management Division of United Laboratories.

The business meeting and the 31st Bienvenido B. Erana Memorial Lecture will be held from 2 to 5 p.m. with Napoleon Rama as guest speaker.

All set for Express reunion

ALL is set for the grand reunion of the alumni of the Philippine Daily Express, who will converge at the National Press Club on Tuesday, May 7 to mark the paper's 30th anniversary.

Organizing committee chair Teddy Berbano of the Philippine Journalists Inc. noted that the response from Daily Express alumni, especially from the production and circulation departments, has been encouraging.

Expected to attend are media personalities such as Pocholo Romualdez of Malaya, former Press Secretary Noel Cabrera, INQUIRER columnist Neal Cruz, Philippine Star columnist Art Borjal, San Fernando Mayor Mary Jane Ortega and *balikbayan* Celia Defensor.

Daily Express alumni may call Berbano at 527-8421 and Luz Eusebio at 445-1840 to confirm their attendance.

Berbano has also tapped friends of the Express through the years to ensure the success of the affair. He is assisted by organizing committee members Radito Torres of PJI, Boy Togonon of Manila Times, Star's Millet Mananquil, Ching Alano and Ricky Lo, Evelyn Diao, Candaba Mayor Normita Baby Evangelista, Luz Eusebio and Alice H. Reyes.

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Senators want PPA scrapped

By Cynthia D. Balana

SENATORS have sought the suspension of the Purchased Power Adjustment (PPA) charge in electric bills after consumers have been complaining of excessive electricity rates.

Sen. Vicente Sotto filed Senate Resolution 290 asking the Department of Energy, the Energy Regulatory Commission and the National Power Corp. to suspend implementation of the PPA charged by power distributors under the Power Reform Act of 2001. The PPA has resulted in power rate increases of at least 100 percent.

"It's hard to be paying for something that you do not understand," Sotto said. "The situation with the PPA is precisely that. We are being charged something the computation of which needs a mathematics professor to understand."

Sotto said the current predicament consumers find themselves in has been compounded by simultaneous increases in gasoline and water prices.

He asked Congress to suspend implementation of the PPA until the public has been sufficiently enlightened on its need and computation.

Sen. Francis Pangilinan said even the DOE considers the rate increase being proposed by the Manila Electric Co. (Meralco), the biggest power distributor in the country, as excessive.

"I'd like to think the DOE has the expertise so that if that is their findings, then Meralco has to be able to rebut that" Pangilinan said.

"Failure on their (Meralco) part to do so and explain the basis for the increase should mean the increase should be denied," he added.

Senate President Pro Tempore Manuel Villar said there is a need to review the PPA since consumers have been complaining about excessive power rates.

Sen. Gregorio Honasan said President Macapagal-Arroyo should step into the problem because it affects "the common people."

Press freedom 1st victim of terror

By Christine Herrera

THE FIRST casualty of war and terrorism is press freedom.

Journalist-delegates to the Unesco World Press Freedom Day International Conference on Terrorism and Media yesterday said the Sept. 11 attack on the United States was being used by some countries as an excuse to curtail freedom of the press.

"Since Sept. 11, press freedom has not quite been the same. What we need to know is whether the curtailment of this liberty is going to be temporary," said Jean-Paul Marthoz, European director of Human Rights Watch, during a conference session at the Westin Philippine Plaza.

Malthoz cited a report by Reporters sans Frontiers (Reporters without Borders) that said the US Federal Bureau of Investigation had demanded from the e-mail provider Hotmail—and got—every detail on every account whose e-mail address included the word "Allah."

"What Sept. 11 in fact did was accelerate developments already begun in the United States by the repercussions of the conflict between Israel and Palestine," Malthoz said.

War on terror

Chris Warren, president of the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), said the declaration by the US and its coalition partners of a "war on terrorism" has created a dangerous situation in which journalists have become victims as well as key actors in unfolding events.

"The campaign after Sept. 11 is a war of a different kind with no clearly defined enemy, no hard-and-fast objective, and no obvious point of conclusion," Warren said. ``Inevitably, this creates a pervasive atmosphere of paranoia in which press freedom and pluralism are made fragile and vulnerable."

As early as Sept. 5, or before the attack, Malthoz said, 500 Internet sites, many of them related to the Arab or Muslim worlds, had become impossible to access after a US government intervention in a Texas company, InfoComp.

WORLD Press Freedom Day celebration starts with the opening of a photo exhibit on "Terrorism and Media" at The Westin Philippine Plaza. Cutting the ribbon are Unesco officers led by Philippine National Commission secretary general Dr. Preciosa S. Soliven (left) with Unesco Paris assistant director general for communication and information Abdul Waheed Khan; Acting Foreign Secretary Franklin Ebdalin; and World Press Freedom Day organizing committee vice co-chair Dr. Florangel Rosario-Braid.

In China, Malthoz said, more than 60 regulations have been issued since 1995 to control Internet content.

In June 1999, Malthoz said, during the Kashmir crisis, India banned access to the website of the Pakistani daily Dawn.

In March 2002, the Indian government pushed through an anti-terrorist bill that was described by the former editor of The Times of India as "an encroachment on the freedom of the press in an unprecedented manner," Malthoz said.

First casualty

"War has never been good for freedom of expression. Before even truth, the first casualty of war is in fact this freedom—the freedom to investigate and report, the freedom to publish criticisms and revelations," Malthoz said.

Anna Politkovskaia, a reporter for Novaya Gazeta from the Russian Federation, said that from the beginning of the second Chechen war, President Putin issued instructions regulating the work of the news media.

Politkovskaia said each journalist had to be accredited by the office of Putin's top aide, Sergei Yastrzhembsky, who was responsible for the so-called "ideological component" of the "anti-terrorist operation."

Politkovskaia said following the Sept. 11 attack, "it has become impossible for an independent journalist, even with all the requisite authorizations, to get past a military checkpoint in Chechnya."

Witness may clear 6 Pinoys in Kuwait slay

KUWAIT CITY—A crucial witness to the murder of Canadian Luc Ethier could clear six Filipinos accused of carrying out the shooting, one of three defense lawyers said on Tuesday.

"There's a witness who saw the killer and heard him shout *'Allahu Akbar'* (God is Greatest) after the shooting, but that witness left the country last week," lawyer Abdul Majeed Khuraibet told reporters on the sidelines of a third court session.

"I requested him (to testify) and he said 'yes' but has left the country," he added.

According to Khuraibet, the witness, an Egyptian, told him the killer was wearing a red and white *gutra* (headscarf), worn predominantly by Gulf Arabs.

The judge accepted Khuraibet's request to call his witness at the next hearing on May 28.

Khuraibet said he is determined to track the witness down and bring him back to Kuwait to testify.

During Tuesday's session, the judge questioned the six defendants—Ethier's wife Mary-Jane Bitos, Jimmy Binuya, Norasa Talib Esick, Lourdes Viray, Rosalia Tesoro Baclig and Teddy Tomaro—all of whom alleged that when first interrogated they were forced to confess under duress.

Tomaro, the first accused in the case, told the court in broken English that he confessed because of "too much beating."

"I only followed State Security instructions because they beat me so much," added Tomaro, seated behind bars.

Tomaro is the only defendant still in prison following last month's release on a personal guarantee of the other five.

Bitos, her arm still in a support from injuries sustained when she was shot three times during the attack, maintained that the first suspect arrested after the shooting, Kuwaiti Islamist Majid al-Mutairi, was the man she saw pulling the trigger.

She said she was told to say that Tomaro was the killer or she would be thrown in jail.

"They were scaring me, shouting at me since 10 (at night) to five in the morning," said a shaking, tearful Bitos when asked why she initially identified Mutairi as the killer before changing her testimony and implicating Tomaro. *AFP*

REMINDER

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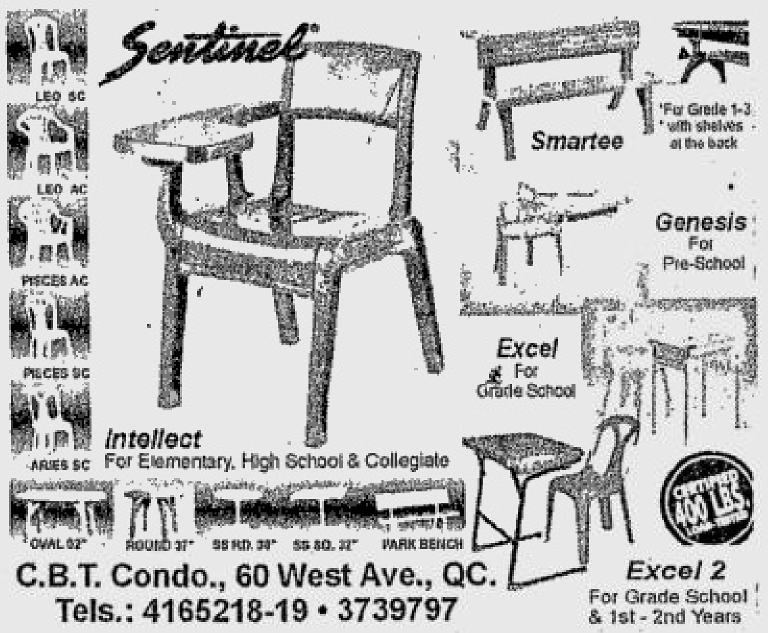

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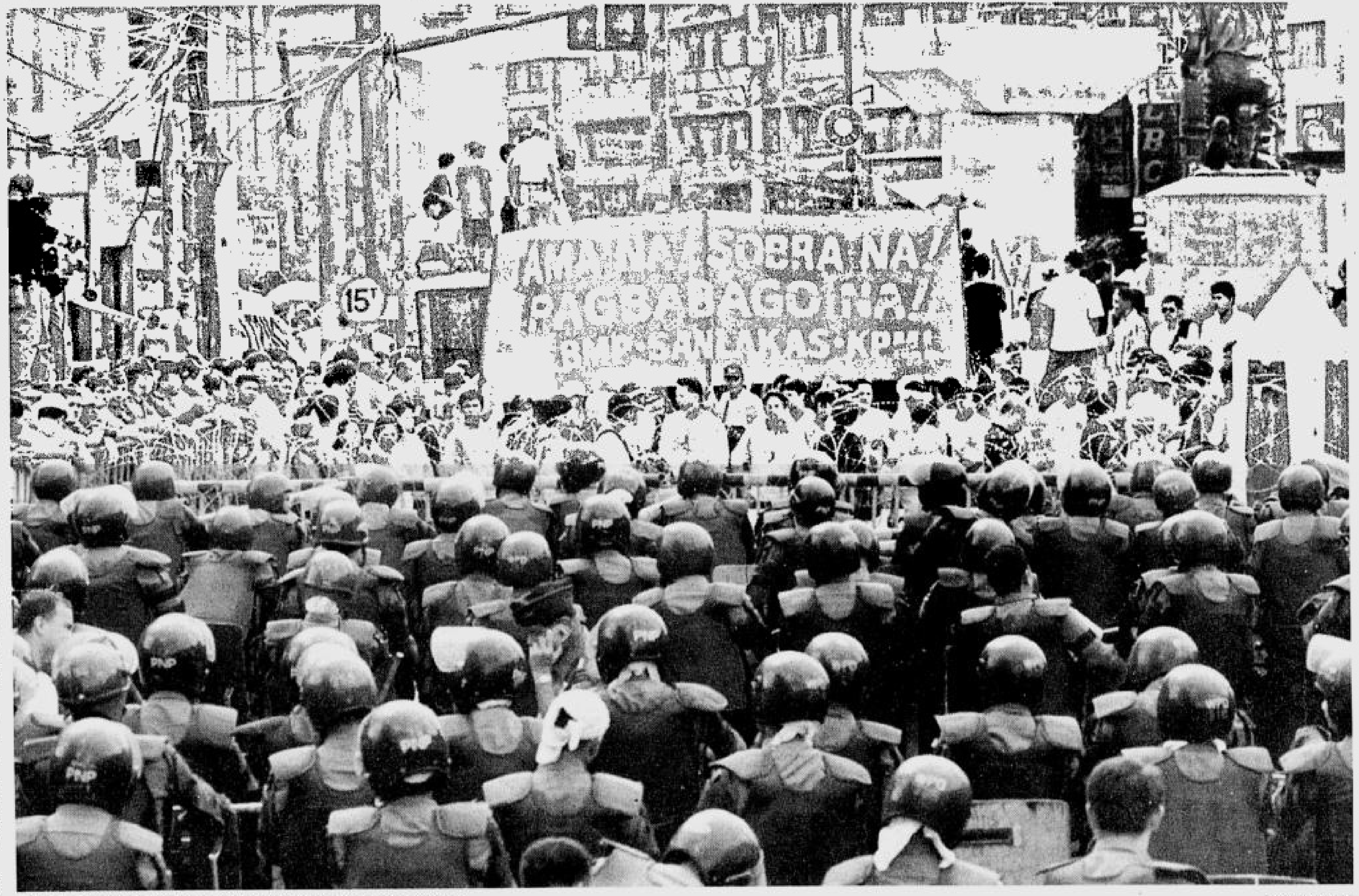
Security dragnet keeps the peace on Labor Day

From page A1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COPS outnumber protesters in "overkill" show of force.

JOAN BONDOC

ficers stopped more than 2,000 workers and members of militant groups from the Southern Tagalog region from proceeding to the Labor Day protest sites in Manila.

In Sto. Tomas, Batangas, the PNP arrested three alleged bomb couriers en route to Metro Manila on Monday night.

In Tarlac City; the police killed one suspected terrorist and arrested another, and recovered several weapons, including four fragmentation grenades.

At the Araneta Center in Cubao, Quezon City, hours before the President was scheduled to speak, authorities also arrested a man who pretended to be a member of the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines but whose backpack yielded assorted weapons.

President Macapagal-Arroyo, in a television interview last night, lauded law enforcement agencies for successfully keeping the peace. Asked whether she agreed with those who said the security preparations were an "overkill," she replied in Filipino: "It's better that the demonstrators know that the government is ready."

Earlier yesterday, a Palace official privy to the security preparations had said, "Even if the pro-Erap protesters (are) able to muster the same number as they did last year, they can no longer and won't be allowed to come close to the Palace."

Security forces, he said, were told "to yield not an inch of ground."

Around 2,000 anti-riot policemen—out of the 6,000 guarding Malacañang and its surroundings—blocked protestors at the historic Don Chino Roces Bridge, behind barbed wire and iron roadblocks.

The police also had two cargo containers and six fire trucks on stand by, in case the ralliers tried to force their way into Malacañang, as pro-Estrada supporters did a year ago. Six 6x6 trucks, carrying several hundred soldiers, were also deployed near the palace—three on J Laurel Street and three on Arlegui.

No violence

Interior Secretary Jose Lina said no violent incidents occurred during the anti-government protests staged separately by Estrada forces and militant labor groups at the Don Chino Roces Bridge, popularly known as Mendiola Bridge, leading to Malacañang. ***(Stories on Page A1.)***

"The rally organizers kept to the agreement we had previously reached to keep the mass actions peaceful," Lina said.

Lina said security forces "are more prepared now compared to last year," referring to last year's siege of Malacañang by Estrada supporters.

"Our forces are better equipped, better trained and they can't be rammed down like what happened in Edsa 3," he said. Lina recalled that Estrada supporters, using a 10-wheeler truck, had broken through police lines in their march from the Edsa Shrine to the Malacañang grounds.

Lina also defended the deployment of thousands of anti-riot policemen around the Palace, saying: "You must have numbers in crowd management."

"We have learned lessons from Edsa 3 and we are applying these now," Lina said.

In a statement, acting Press Secretary Silvestre Afable defended the setting-up of checkpoints, which prevented the entry into Metro Manila of some protest groups.

"Checkpoints are there to make sure that wanted persons or weapons are not included in the traffic stream," Afable said. "This is for the safety of everybody."

Afable said the checkpoints were for "routine law enforcement" and that "these have not been set up to curtail the freedom of travel of supporters" of Estrada. He said there was no intention to infringe on their freedom to assemble and express their views.

Calamba exit

In Calamba, authorities stopped more than 2,000 workers and members of militant groups led by Bagong Alyansang Makabayan-Southern Tagalog from joining the demonstrations in Mendiola.

Pastor Mel Abesamis, Bayan-ST chair, told the INQUIRER that three truckloads of AFP and PNP men blocked their caravan of 24 buses and more than 10 jeepneys at the Calamba tollgate.

The security personnel then asked them for their permits to travel.

The authorities also allegedly asked the drivers to surrender their respective licenses. Abesamis said the group was held for about two hours; at press time, they were still trying to negotiate permission to proceed to Mendiola.

He said the soldiers and policemen refused to divulge the name of their commander. "They just told us that the order to stop (us) came from Malacañang. That was all," Abesamis said.

"This was the first time in so many years that our group was asked for permits or drivers' licenses as a condition for us to pass the tollgate. We did not comply with their senseless order. We were only joining our fellow workers in celebrating Labor Day in Mendiola. And we are only asking for a P125 across-the-board wage increase for our workers," a militant leader identified as Ka Edwin told the INQUIRER.

SCREAM of protest from an obviously rabid supporter of ex-President Estrada.

AP

In Sto. Tomas, Batangas, three alleged bomb couriers from Camarines Sur on their way to Manila were nabbed by the police at a police checkpoint on Maharlika Highway.

Batangas police director Senior Supt. Rolando Lorenzo identified the alleged bomb runners as Michael de Guia, 18, single, a fish vendor from Barangay Sinuknipan, Del Gallego town, Camarines Sur; Noel Acban, 32, married, jobless, from Barangay San Roque, Nabua, Camarines Sur; and Mark Anthony Merced, 19, single, jobless, of Maramba, Oas, Albay province.

"Had we not stopped those three men, they could have taken the bomb powder and blasting cords to Manila," Lorenzo said. "We think that the bomb paraphernalia (was) supposed to be delivered to some groups in Manila and used in high-explosion bombs that can turn Labor Day ralliers into blown-up body parts."

According to Lorenzo, one cup of the bomb powder can blow up an entire movie house. The bomb powder confiscated, which weighed more or less 1.5 kilos, could have been used against the ralliers and the anti-rally police in Manila, he said.

Tarlac shootout

In Tarlac City, police foiled an alleged attempt by two heavily armed men to sow terror after killing one of them in a shootout and arresting the other during an operation before dawn yesterday.

A certain Khalid was killed when he shot it out with members of the Tarlac city police. His companion, Omar Mayuno, alias Dexter Mayuno, yielded to the police after the gunfight, police said in a report.

The policemen recovered two homemade .38 cal. revolvers, four fragmentation grenades and several Islamic pamphlets.

Mayuno, who claimed that they belonged to a group called Haraka headed by one Sheik Hamod, admitted under interrogation that they had planned to mount terrorist attacks in the city during yesterday's Labor Day rites.

"This was a timely arrest," said Senior Supt. Leonardo Espina, spokesperson of the Philippine National Police. But he said the police have no information yet on the Haraka group or its alleged leader.

Policemen from the Tarlac provincial office and Tarlac city police proceeded to Barangay San Nicolas around 12:30 a.m. Wednesday after receiving reports from residents about the presence of two suspicious-looking men in the area. On seeing the policemen, an alarmed Khalid opened fire and engaged the policemen in a gunfight.

Espina said that tight security measures adopted by the police has helped ensure a peaceful Labor Day celebration.

"We saw to it that saboteurs and provocateurs would be screened," he said, citing the arrest of an armed man who sneaked inside the Araneta Coliseum in Quezon City hours before the arrival of Ms Macapagal.

Undercover security policemen collared Joseph Venenzuela, 29, of Kalawahan, Pasig City, after he slipped into the coliseum's green gate around 12:30 p.m., which was closed to the public for security reasons.

Seized from him was a knapsack containing two kitchen knives, an improvised ice pick, a lead pipe, several identification cards and an entry pass.

Venenzuela, who wore a military undershirt and pants, claimed he was a TUCP member but was promptly disowned by officials of the labor group.

He later claimed he was undergoing treatment at the National Center for Mental Health in Mandaluyong City.

Misuari alert

Authorities yesterday also tightened security at the detention cell of Moro rebel leader Nur Misuari inside a police training camp in Sta. Rosa, Laguna, following reports that his supporters would attempt to spring him from detention on Labor Day.

"We have taken necessary contingency measures just in case these intelligence reports come true. We have beefed up security within and outside the camp," Espina said.

He added: "So any attempts would definitely fail."

Espina confirmed intelligence reports about plans by forces loyal to the former chair of the Moro National Liberation Front to raid the Special Action Force training camp and rescue him on Labor Day.

"We have been receiving intelligence information that some of his members would try to bolt him out of jail for a very long time now. These reports persist," he told reporters.

Misuari, who is facing charges for allegedly leading a short-lived rebellion in Mindanao in November last year, is detained inside a bungalow at the sprawling SAF camp. A court was built inside the camp for his trial. ***With reports from Dona Pazzibugan; Mei Magsino, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; Romulo O. Ponte and Delfin T, Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

Bayan marshals collar armed cop in their ranks

By Philip Tubeza

SECURITY marshals of the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan caught an armed undercover policeman in their ranks during the Labor Day rally at Mendiola last night. He was reportedly trying to get close to Bayan Muna Rep. Crispin Beltran

SPO1 Jocelyn Cariño was in civilian clothes when members of the militant group pounced on him near the Don Chino Roces Bridge.

A mob then formed around Cariño, who was allegedly armed with a .45-caliber handgun. The marshals turned over Cariño to the police, who at press time were trying to determine if he was a member of the intelligence arm of the Philippine National Police or the National Capital Region Police Office.

Cariño allegedly had at least two other companions with him, one of whom had a fan knife. But police say they only have Cariño in their custody.

Beltran was speaking with his colleagues at the back of the Bayan truck in Mendiola when Cariño was caught at around 6:30 p.m.

"(Cariño) was walking in the direction of Ka Bel (when he was caught)," said Teddy Casiño of Bayan. "We don't know what (Cariño) intended to do."

A scuffle ensued as Kilusang Mayo Uno members tried to subdue the plainclothesman.

"We noticed that there was a bulge in his waist," said Elmer Labog, KMU secretary general. "When we tried to frisk (Cariño), he would not let us."

Cariño's alleged companions tried to fend off the marshals but they were also overpowered. Labog said the infiltrators were later turned over to the police.

Police took Cariño to the police outpost near San Beda College.

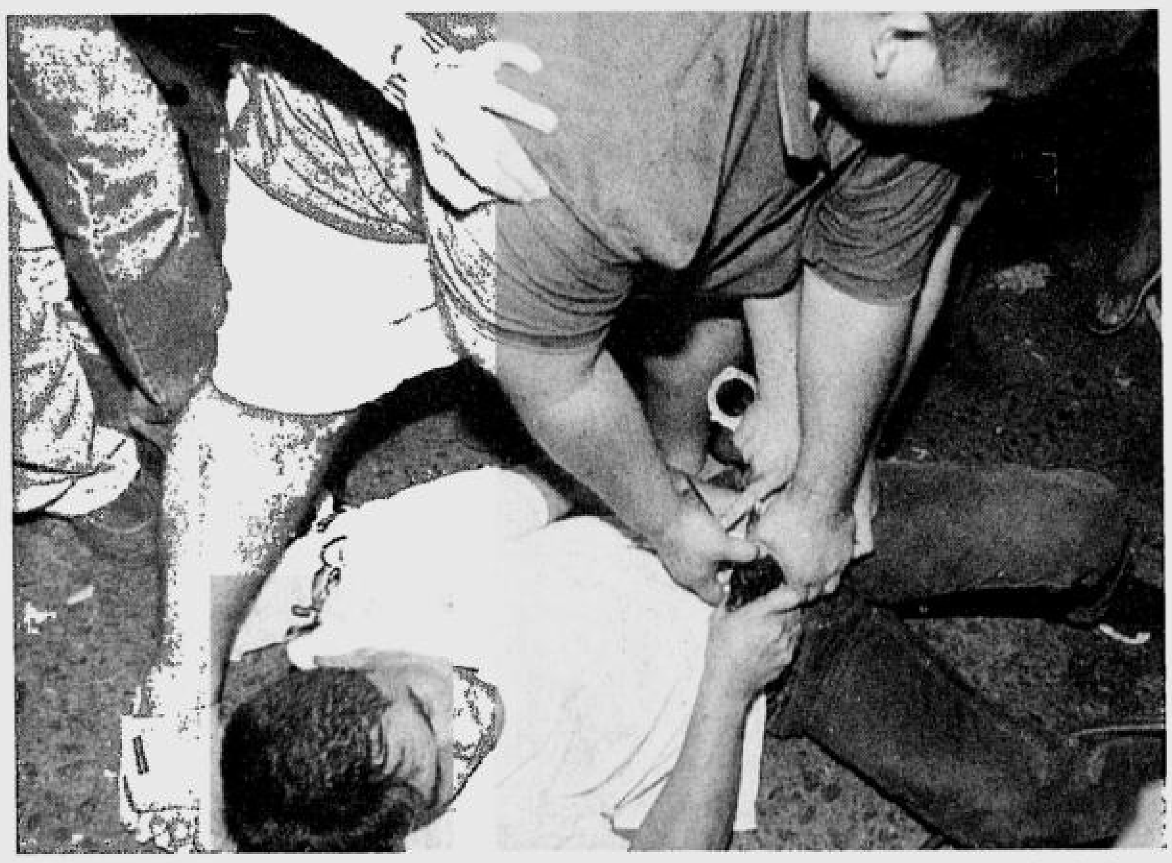
Labog blamed the police for the incident, noting the irony that the lawmen were supposed to ensure the peaceful observance of Labor Day.

Metro Manila police chief Edgardo Aglipay congratulated the militants' vigilance, but downplayed speculation that Cariño had something sinister in mind.

Aglipay said Cariño faces dismissal from the service for violating a direct order for policemen not to carry firearms during rallies, especially when they mingle with the protesters.

"He is in direct violation of my specific order that no policemen carry guns," Aglipay said. "I myself don't have my gun with me."

He added that an administrative case will be filed against Cariño.



A POLICEMAN,SPO1 Jocelyn Cariño, who infiltrated the Bayan rally in Mendiola is caught by its marshals after they noted he was carrying a concealed .45-caliber pistol. He was turned over to the police.

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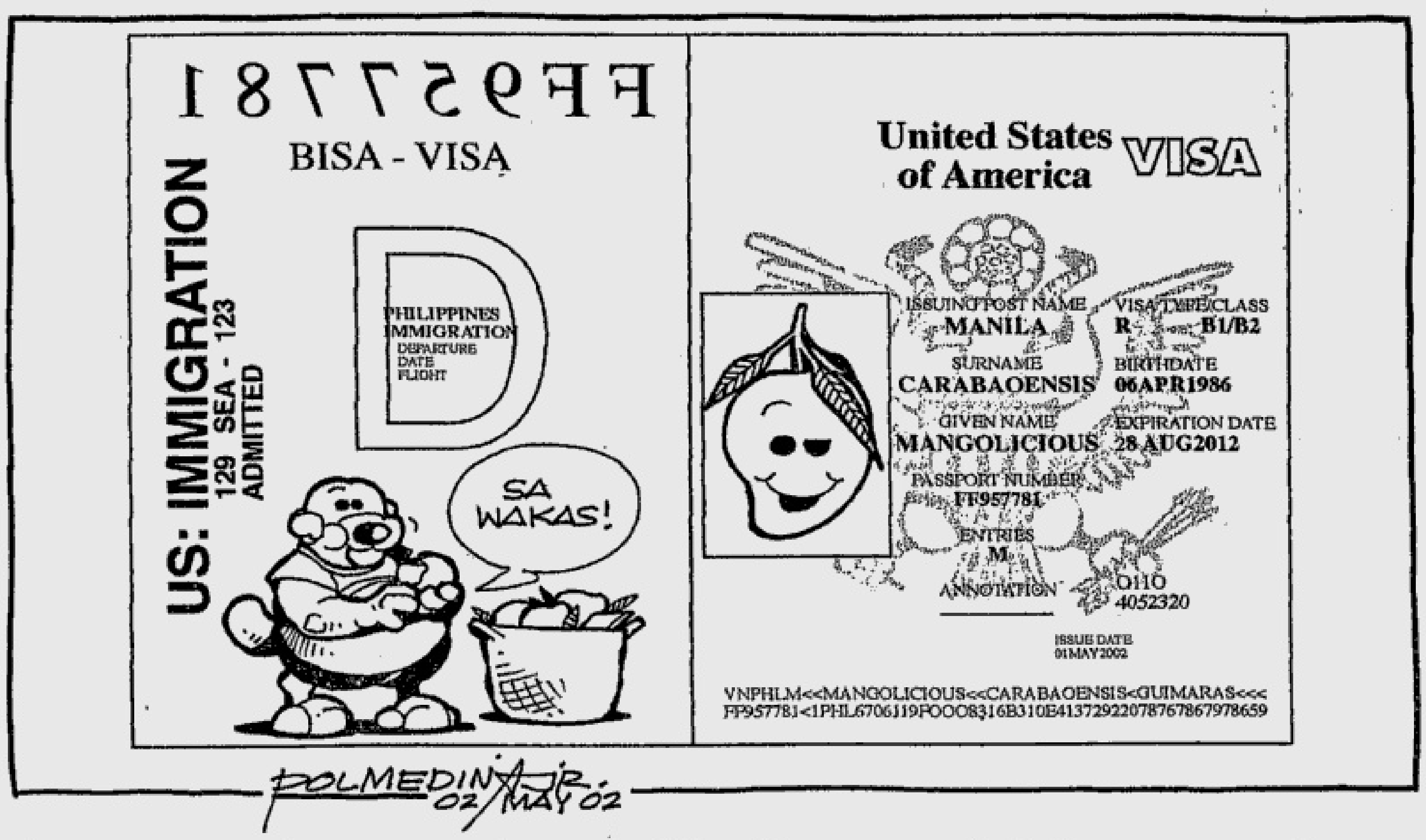


Fair game

EDITORIAL

THE WORLD Freedom Day celebration now under way in Manila has correctly thrown its focus on media and terrorism, which is the theme of a two-day international workshop attended by local and foreign journalists.

In the aftermath of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks in the United States, the workshop calls attention to the dilemmas of the media covering events associated with the contentious term "terrorism." These dilemmas have multiplied, accenting the issues of conflict between the public's right to know and the security of the state.

The workshop cannot be expected to resolve these issues, but its participants can draw valuable lessons from the coverage of the Abu Sayyaf hostage-taking in the Philippines and the US-led military campaign against the Taliban regime and its al-Qaida ally in Afghanistan as they try to determine their own coverage guidelines and priorities.

In the Abu Sayyaf hostage-taking, for example, the reporters and correspondents learned from first-hand experience that there are no formal "fronts" in the campaign against terrorism. A number of them were themselves taken hostage and were only freed after ransom was paid for their release, just like the original kidnap victims. Terror groups don't respect press cards, although the Abu Sayyaf outlaws know how to use the media for propaganda and, in fact, manipulated Radio Mindanao to air their demands and even to spread information that misled the military in its operations. In sum, the war on terrorists has increased the hazards of journalists beyond the risk of being killed or wounded while being caught in the crossfire.

In the military campaign in Afghanistan, coverage was done behind the military forces bombarding the Taliban and al-Qaida strongholds, sending to their audiences and readers all over the world a lopsided view of the war. There was, of course, the alternative Al-Jazeerah press network which presented information about Osama bin Laden and the radical Islamist rationale for the Sept. 11 attacks.

While this may be a case of lopsided news coverage, the Western media, with their liberal orientation on freedom of information regardless of who got hurt, did come under government pressure driven by President George W. Bush's dictum that "if you are not with us in the war on terrorism, you are against us." Some sectors of media bridled over this form of pressure that equated uncritical flow of information from government sources with patriotism.

Even the rhetoric of media coverage has been weighed down by cultural baggage. The word "terrorism" was widely accepted by members of the United Nations when the Security Council handed down resolutions condemning as terrorist acts the Sept. 11 bombings and endorsing the US-led campaign to combat terrorist networks wherever they appear—whether in the form of the Abu Sayyaf or of support given to terrorist networks by Iraqi President Saddam Hussein. Despite the UN resolutions, "terrorism" has not been defined with clarity, and Islamic extremists have seized upon this to point out that the Western world is as guilty as Bin Laden's cohorts in terrorism.

Censorship as well as security restrictions to access to news about the war and the clampdown on access to alternative news sources have been a pronounced feature of the coverage of this "war without borders." This increases the risks of media beyond the occupational hazards that flow from covering conflict. Neither states nor combatants can guarantee the safety of media personnel. We can therefore expect more, rather than diminished, casualties in this new form of warfare. In the history of war coverage, no one has ever been made accountable for the deaths of journalists going about their duty.

Delegates at the Unesco-sponsored media forum are one in saying that the first casualty of war and terrorism is press freedom. This flows from the fundamental conflict between access to information and the government's assertion of the security of the state or its right to survive hostile actions, including terrorism. The tragedy of the media is that their activities are not covered by an international convention like the Geneva Convention which governs the treatment of combatants and spells out the rules of engagement. Since they are not combatants, journalists are fair game. That's the consequence of being in no-man's land and yet this zone is often at the center of the search for information.

NBI: Caloocan 'swindled' out of 2-hectare lot

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

(Continued from yesterday)

THIS is about a scam involving the sale in 1998 of a choice two-hectare commercial lot in Caloocan on which stands the Ever-Gotesco Grand Central mall, under the gaze of Andres Bonifacio and his Katipuneros.

Nearly 20 years ago, this lot was leased by the city government under then Mayor Macario Asistio Jr. to Gotesco Investments for 25 years, renewable for another 25 years. What followed this simple lease transaction is a complex tale of deception and legal maneuvers which left the city holding an empty bag and Gotesco holding this piece of prime land. The city never got the P182 million supposedly paid for the property.

A careful scrutiny of voluminous records from the National Bureau of Investigation show how Gotesco was able to wrest ownership of the property from the city government without paying a single centavo. The sale had been disapproved by the Commission on Audit in 1992 but was pushed by Gotesco four years after its disapproval through the COA, when its membership changed, and through the Caloocan City Council. Mayor Reynaldo Malonzo opposed the sale but his veto was overriden by the council.

- Because of Malonzo's vigorous opposition, Gotesco filed a Complaint for Consignation (a plea for the court to deliver the property to the complainant, Gotesco) in the regional trial court of Caloocan, Branch 122. This was reraffled later to Branch 131 after the judge of Branch 122 inhibited himself from the case.
- While the case was still with RTC 122, Gotesco submitted to the court two personal checks, one ostensibly representing payment for the lot (P182,085,078.30) and another for the payment of transfer fees (P910,425.39). In addition, Gotesco submitted a cashier's check purportedly for the payment of real estate taxes due on the property (P9,687,440.16).
- The clerk of court issued certifications for the purported payments, which were used, along with other documents, by Gotesco and the register of deeds of Caloocan to cancel TCT 54327 in the name of Caloocan and to issue TCT 326321 in the name of Gotesco.
- Register of deeds Yolanda Alfonso made the transfer of title in spite of the notice from Malonzo **not** to register such transfer. Alfonso relied on the opinion of Land Registration Authority Administrator Maulit that the 1990 deed of absolute sale could be registered provided all the requirements were complied with. She also cited the opinion Gotesco got from Interior Undersecretary (now Press Undersecretary) Manuel Sanchez that the 1990 deed of absolute sale was "registrable."
- In July 1999, Gotesco withdrew its complaint for consignation. So the court dismissed the case with prejudice and permitted Gotesco to retrieve the cashier's check earlier submitted by Gotesco purportedly in payment of real estate taxes—on the condition that the same should be paid to the city government. As to the two personal checks submitted by Gotesco purportedly in payment of the selling price and transfer fees, they remain in the custody of the court undeposited or unencashed—and by this time they are worthless pieces of paper.

In short, ownership of Caloocan's patrimonial property was transferred to a private entity on the basis of a mere certification. Caloocan City has been duped; it ceded its property for nothing.

The NBI said in its report:

"The consignation of the selling price in the RTC 122 of Caloocan by Gotesco was nothing but a legal maneuver to conceal the fact that no payments for the selling price as well as for the transfer fees and real property taxes were actually made. Stated differently, there was no actual cash out on the part of Gotesco. The City of Caloocan did not receive any payment for the selling price, transfer fees and real property taxes. The check payments were not cashed. Through Gotesco's legal maneuvers in the court, those checks remained undeposited. In short, there was no actual consideration for the sale. The deal was a swindle wherein the City of Caloocan clearly had been the victim.

"The personal check for P182,085,078.30 handed to the court by Gotesco purportedly in payment of the selling price was not deposited in the bank and had never been cashed or credited in favor of the RTC of Caloocan mainly as a result of Gotesco's deliberate legal maneuvers which prevented the court from depositing it to its bank account as required under Supreme Court Circular No. 13792

"It must be pointed out that under Article 1249 of the Civil Code, delivery of checks and other mercantile documents does not produce the effect of payment until the same has been actually cashed."

The NBI Anti-Graft Division recommends the filing of the corresponding charges against the responsible corporate officers, their lawyer and members of the board of directors of Gotesco Investments, Caloocan register of deeds Yolanda Alfonso, the three commissioners and certain officials of the COA, and members of the Caloocan City Council.

To date, Gotesco continues to hold and rake in piles of money out of the Ever-Gotesco Grand Central at the expense of Caloocan City and its taxpayers and residents.

What about the NBI recommendation to file graft and swindling charges against those involved in the conspiracy? Well, it is gathering dust in the NBI under Director Reynaldo Wycoco. Two years after the investigation was concluded, no case has been filed against Gotesco, the Go family and their alleged co-conspirators.

Deceptions

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

SEN. Nene Pimentel says there's no way Basilan can turn out to be a forward military base for the United States. The Constitution is clear, he says. Before the United States can (re)build a base in this country, it has to have a treaty with this government. And a treaty has to pass through the Senate.

Gen. Richard Myers, chair of the US Joint Chief of Staffs, says the same thing. He says the United States does not intend to set up a permanent military base in the Philippines for whatever reason. What they do intend to do is fight terrorism in the region. "The United States has a lot of interests in the Asia-Pacific region. We are a Pacific Rim nation and a lot of our trade and well-being relates to what happens in the region. This is an issue about our presence in the region to promote stability and hopefully good commerce."

Well, the Constitution may be clear on what procedures need to be taken before military bases are set up in this country, but it is just as clear on how long and how many American soldiers may participate in war games in this country, and no one is following it. It's not the Constitution that's dictating President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's decisions, it's the Social Weather Stations and Pulse Asia. Both groups say many Filipinos like having American soldiers around and Ms Macapagal doesn't mind that the Constitution says otherwise.

Myers' statements, on the other hand, should put a couple of fallacies to rest once and for all.

The first is that the sudden deluge of American troops here has anything to do with the Abu Sayyaf. That was how Ms Macapagal justified it from the start: the war games were being held in Basilan for the express purpose of wiping out the Abu Sayyaf. I said from the start as well that the proportion of the forces ranged in battle—the whole of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and a whole contingent of American troops, armed with satellite technology versus a handful of kidnappers—made that claim preposterous. The building of infrastructure in Basilan, the fanning of American troops throughout the rest of the country and the very persistence of the Abu Sayyaf in Basilan after being hunted down all these months by all these people, should bury that claim completely. Myers' statements merely hammer the last nail on the coffin.

That alone must show us what's wrong with renewed American military presence in this country—the fact that it was sold from the start by a lie. Ms Macapagal could very well have come out early this year and said: "Look, the US is determined to flex its muscle in the Asia-Pacific region and wants us to help. If we do, these are the things we stand to gain from it." If she had done that, we could very rationally have sat down to debate the proposition. But she did not. She said the Americans came out of the goodness of their heart to do for us what we could not do ourselves. That brought a lot of gullible Filipinos writing letters to the editor saying we should chuck our foolish pride; our house was on fire, we should accept help from the rich neighbor down the block.

A thing that is sold by a lie will continue to be sold by a lie.

The second fallacy Myers' statements put to rest is related to the first. It is that the Americans are here to do things for us. As Myers shows, they are here to do things for **them**. They are here to pursue American interests in Asia and the Pacific. It would be stretching the myth of Bataan too far to imagine those interests are the same as ours.

Retired Ambassador Reynaldo Arcilla hit the nail right on the head when he wrote last Saturday: "I don't care what the US decides to do. What I care about is what we will do. What the US will do, to be sure, won't be for love of the Filipinos."

He himself wondered earlier in his letter why Ms Macapagal's "giving in to nearly all the demands of the United States" was rewarded with the United States advising its citizens not to travel to the Philippines. All this must compel us, he suggested, to ask ourselves what we're getting out of this.

The answer is one that can warm the heart only of masochists.

The advisory against American nationals visiting this country is just the tip of the iceberg. Other countries, like Japan, have issued that advisory as well. The American and British embassies have already warned their countrymen against visiting Southern Philippines. We insist on painting ourselves as a country overrun by terrorists, the world is going to believe us. It's enough to make you believe in karma that Secretary Richard Gordon, the staunchest defender of American bases, should preside over the tourism department at the very moment his former benefactors are depicting the country as another Afghanistan.

I've already written about the implications for the future of our democracy of turning our military into the new cultural icon, of turning warlords like Wahab Akbar into the champion of anti-terrorism and infusing the country with a war-freak mind-set, one that is bound to resurrect the vigilantes and religious cults in Mindanao. Only one thing remains to be put to rest, which is Ms Macapagal's repeated claim that the return of US military presence would do wonders for our economy. Here, one needs only quote someone who knew a thing or two about the economic affairs of the Asia-Pacific region. He is former Japanese Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa who said in an interview in 1998: "It was after the US withdrew from Indochina and Thailand in the 1970s that economic growth in Southeast Asia gained momentum and economic relations with the United States began to expand. The economy of the Philippines took off after the US forces left there in the 1990s. These experiences show that there is little or no relation between foreign military presence and economic growth."

It's just lies, lies and more lies.

* * *

Comments to dequiros@vasia.com

GMA upstages Gridiron

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

THE OPPOSITION has accused the Palace of "paranoia" because of the heavy security it has detailed for yesterday and the next few days. But to the majority of citizens, it's better to be prepared. The lesson of May 1, 2001 cannot be forgotten too soon. In fact, the troops ought to be congratulated for being better prepared than ever before for any violence. As PNP Director Edgar Aglipay, National Capital Region Command chief, told this columnist in a brief conversation yesterday, one's responses are not quite the same when one is not prepared as when one is prepared.

As this column was being written before the scheduled rally at Mendiola, I could only pray, together with many citizens, that the anti-government ralliers would not resort to violence, and that the government forces would remain cool and not be provoked. Yesterday morning, Aglipay prepared the troops by having Holy Mass said in all the areas of deployment.

* * *

There were disturbing indications that the anti-government ralliers were preparing to provoke the police. Intelligence reports indicate that the rally organizers distributed 2,000 pieces of *yantok* as well as pillboxes and *sumpak* (home-made guns) to ralliers, and prepared several truckloads of rocks and stones. Apparently the idea was to hurt the troops so that they would shoot into the crowds and thus provide the provocateurs with yet another round of propaganda ammunition.

There were also reports of money flowing into Cagayan Valley to recruit people. From Bataan and Laguna truckloads of people were also being brought to the rally, according to reports. Government forces allowed some of them passage on condition they would not resort to violence, but others were stopped at the city boundaries.

As noted by the media, the anti-government forces had some strange bedfellows. Finally, Philippine Consultative Assembly's Linda Montayre, who turned bitter against the Macapagal administration after her husband was removed from the PCSO, has revealed her true colors and has now teamed up with the Estrada forces.

* * *

The legitimate opposition led by Sen. Edgardo Angara has stressed over and over that it would not be a party to any attempt to overthrow the administration, preferring instead to get ready for the 2004 election. That became apparent the other evening as Angara obviously tried to ride on the Erap camp's predilection for high drama, doubtless to capitalize on the residual pro-Erap sentiment among the *masa*. He said on TV that he had heard of reports that he and Sen. Panfilo Lacson would be implicated in a plot to instigate violence, thus giving the police an excuse to arrest them. Angara's allegation doesn't make sense to thinking people who know that the government needs such an arrest like a hole in the head. But that was for the *masa*'s consumption, like the scripted drama of the "Ama ng Masa" "censorship."

* * *

Interior Secretary Joey Lina called up Angara yesterday morning and told him, "*Bakit naman ganyan, Ed, kilala mo naman ako*... You know I would never countenance such a move. *Baka naman nang-iintriga lang ang nagbigay sa iyo ng* report."

Aglipay also denied publicly that there was such an order. Indeed, no move could be more counter-productive, insane and absurd than ordering the opposition leaders' arrest, and they know it. But to my mind, this only tends to confirm the story *na matunog na matunog* in the Senate that Angara and Lacson will lead the opposition ticket in 2004. So it's not just GMA who's politicking.

* * *

Makati Rep. Teodoro Locsin Jr. has advised the President to "stay cool and not overreact" to all the threats from the opposition. And judging from her demeanor at the National Press Club's Gridiron Night at the Manila Hotel the other night, she is doing just that. I bumped into Bulletin publisher Nap Rama and asked him to fill me in on what happened during the Gridiron which I missed, and he observed that despite all the talk of mass unrest on Labor Day, Ms Macapagal was her usual exuberant and jolly self that evening, kidding the newsmen and making everyone laugh. Rama opined that her speech was her best in two months and that she rendered a "sparkling performance, unbothered and unintimidated," as though she had never read the papers. "In fact, she upstaged the Gridiron," said Nap.

* * *

Recently I wrote about my visit to a center in Bago City, run by Project Dungganon the major program of the Negros Women for Tomorrow Foundation (NWTF) that lends small credit to over 34,000 women from the poorest families in Negros and northern Cebu. The micro-credit scheme is patterned after the one that was devised by Prof. Muhammad Yunus of Bangladesh. The Bago borrowers came to their weekly meeting with their weekly payments on loans, ranging from P5,000 to P12,000, payable in three months to one year, without collateral, at 32 percent interest.

The women said these loans enabled them to put up small businesses such as buying a fishing boat, pottery and *bagoong*-making, distributing salt to *tapa* makers, selling vegetables or cooked food. And with their earnings, they were able to send their children to school, including a few in college. Their faith in the ability of the educational system to pull them up from poverty is touching, and the government should do everything to upgrade the system that has deteriorated badly over the decades.

I admire those small borrowers who have been inured to poverty all their lives but who remain optimistic that their habits of thrift, industriousness and self-discipline would help release their families from the bondage of poverty. They form the real backbone of this nation, not those politicians who try to make political capital from their poverty.

A new road for labor

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

THE COUNTRY observes the centenary of the trade union movement in the Philippines this year. A hundred years ago, Isabelo de los Reyes spearheaded the founding of the first labor federation, the Union Obrera Democratica, gathering about 150 unions in the tobacco and printing industries. Among these was the first labor union in the country, Union Litograficos y Impresores de Filipinas, organized by De los Reyes among workers in a German-owned printing press.

Given the momentous occasion, it seems quite a shame that on Labor Day the issues at the forefront of the coverage were not labor-related but political.

Of course, with May 1 also going down in infamy as the anniversary of that unruly and violent march to Malacañang, the authorities cannot be blamed for preparing for every possible contingency. Call the preparations "overkill" if you will, but certainly, the country shouldn't see a repeat of the siege. Another incident like that and Dick Gordon can kiss his tourism promotions program goodbye, and we might as well pack the bags of foreign investors for them, give them a handshake and watch as they leave our shores.

* * *

THE ECLIPSING of organized labor on its own special day symbolizes only too clearly the marginalization of the labor movement in this country.

Only about 10 percent of all Filipino workers are organized, that is, members of a labor union. The majority of the labor force, in fact, is not even formally employed. Most workers belong to what's known as the "informal" sector, either self-employed or engaged in trades beyond regulation or organization.

The waning influence of trade unions is even more puzzling given the rising unemployment statistics in this country. Or could that precisely be the explanation for it? Is it possible that in a situation where jobs are scarce and competition is heating up, workers are deciding for themselves that finding and keeping employment, no matter how onerous the conditions, is more important than improving one's lot in solidarity with other workers?

Workers have long known, of course, that only in solidarity and organized action can they muster enough clout to match the hiring-and-firing and wage-paying power of capital and management. That still holds true even in a service and knowledge-based economy. Perhaps it's time trade unions explored other ways of reaching workers, or tried out other approaches to win better working conditions and forms of compensation, such as non-wage benefits.

After a hundred years and unsuccessfully riding a downward spiral, perhaps it's time for the movement to jump off the business-as-usual train and find a new vehicle if they wish to remain relevant.

* * *

SHOULD Malacañang get involved in a private criminal complaint? Is there national interest involved in a case of assault and damages filed against four Syrians by a news team of ABS-CBN? Then why is presidential adviser Norberto Gonzales and even reportedly Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo putting the squeeze on immigration and police authorities to go easy on the Syrians?

Last April 23, near midnight, an ABS-CBN news team, composed of reporter Rosamy "Jing" Castañeda, camera operator Isagani Taoatao and driver William Natividad, were shooting footage of the night scene in the vicinity of Fields Avenue in Angeles City when they were suddenly accosted by four foreigners. The men, who turned out to be Syrians, accused the team of shooting them without their knowledge. Despite an apology from Castañeda and an offer to erase their images right there and then, the four men loudly demanded that the camera and tape be turned over to them. When the news team refused, a tussle ensued, and, fearing for their safety, Castañeda and her companions sped away.

After turning a corner, the team chanced upon a patrol car and after reporting the incident to the police, they offered to lead them to where they encountered the foreigners. On the way back, the ABS-CBN pick-up nearly collided with a speeding car carrying the Syrians.

At once, both vehicles screeched to a stop and from the car a man rushed out clutching a steel baseball bat, with which he proceeded to smash the pick-up's windshield. If the police had not been around, more violence and damage could conceivably have taken place.

* * *

ESCORTED to the police station, the Syrians were loudly boasting about their connections, particularly one Issam El Debs who claimed to be a "consul general" of the Syrian Embassy and demanded that his diplomatic immunity be respected and extended to his companions. They also threatened to file charges of assault against the TV crew.

The ABS-CBN crew has filed a complaint against the four with the Bureau of Immigration and Deportation. El Debs, it turns out, is merely an honorary consul and is thus not entitled to immunity. And after Immigration Commissioner Andrea Domingo threatened him with sanctions, El Debs was forced to present two companions, one of whom had already been able to leave the country.

Word is that the Syrians, through the representations of the Libyan ambassador, have appealed for help from Malacañang, reportedly banking on claims that they have been assisting in the peace talks with Muslim separatist groups. Perhaps what the news team wants is not so much the backing of Malacañang—they don't really need it as they believe they have a strong case—but that the Palace keep its hands off the entire affair and, as the cliché goes, let justice take its course.

Women writers in the face of terror

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

"No press is truly free unless women share an equal voice."—**International Women's Media Foundation**

TOMORROW is World Press Freedom Day. I will remember in a special way my Filipino colleagues who lost their lives while in the line of duty, for being for truth, for lending their voices to those who have been silenced, for pushing the limits and going over the edge in order to make the world listen and see.

Felled colleagues. I will not write their names here, lest I fail to mention some. But yes, I will light a candle to honor their spirit. Many of them belonged to the provincial press. They worked in small, local settings where their lives were very vulnerable. Those who belong to big, national media institutions and have "high profile" bylines have better security—even better pay. But the provincial journalists have to deal more directly and on a day-to-day basis with local warlords, crime syndicates and power trippers. But being "national" does not mean you are entirely safe. If the bad guys really want to get you, they will get you.

World Press Freedom Day, May 3, is two days after Labor Day, May 1. Since this column piece comes out between those two days, I was torn between two themes.

Journalists as working force. Those of us who are employed in big media companies (like the Inquirer) think of ourselves not just as journalists who live special and sometimes dangerous lives but also as ordinary members of this country's working force. I am a unionist, a member of the Philippine Daily Inquirer Employees' Union. I am the only columnist in the main opinion page who is an *unyonista*. Well, that's because I am a salaried staff writer with other writing assignments, that is, feature stories and special and I-Team reports. ("I" for investigative. One Inquirer reader described it as, *'yun bang may* Part 1 and Part 2.)

Although it has its share of controversies, our union is quite strong. Maybe proof of this is the fact that the profit share we get from the company is comparatively quite good. Regardless of tenure and salary level, each employee gets the same "whopping" profit share each year. There was one good year when we got more than a hundred grand each. We share some of this with those doing janitorial services who are not Inquirer employees.

But it was not so "whopping" in 2000 when then President Estrada rallied his cronies to declare an ad boycott against the Inquirer. Ad revenues decreased but that did not force the editorial section to hold back. Our working force bit the bullet. We survived.

Mabuhay tayong mga manggagawa ng Inquirer!

Going back to the topic of press freedom, a Unesco-sponsored international conference on "Terrorism and Media" is now going on at the Westin Philippine Plaza. This is a venue to discuss the role of media, guidelines for media coverage, ethics, professionalism and safety. The Unesco Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize will be conferred on Geoffrey Nyarota, editor in chief of Zimbabwe's only independent newspaper, the Daily News.

Courageous women writers. On the women's front, the International Women's Media Foundation (IWMF), of which some of us are members, has consistently honored media women of courage with its Courage in Journalism Awards. This year's awardees are Amal Abbas of Khartuom, Sudan; Carmen Gurruchaga (who is in Manila now) of Spain; and Jineth Bedoya Lima of Bogota, Colombia. Gurruchaga and Lima are currently on the death lists of terrorist organizations in their countries. The awards ceremony was held in Washington, D.C.

Gurruchaga has been covering for more than 20 years the Basque terrorist group ETA. In her acceptance speech she said: "Right here, in the heart of the Western world, journalists live and work like many of their colleagues in the Third World countries—with fear of being assassinated by a terrorist organization, simply for thinking differently from them. In Spain, and in the Basque country, being a journalist and trying to do your job in freedom may cost you your life." Gurruchaga has published a book on ETA and its followers and expects death threats upon her return to Madrid.

Profound pain. Lima was abducted, brutally beaten and almost raped two years ago. Said she: "I was overwhelmed by the presence of death. My life plunged into a nightmare that has not yet subsided. The terrorists who wanted to put an end to my dreams failed, because even though I am burdened with a profound pain, I have the firm conviction that I will persevere." The award, she said, was an acknowledgement of hundreds of women who have suffered rape and humiliation, as she has, but who continue to live in anonymity.

Amal Abbas, editor in chief of a newspaper in Khartuom, could not attend the award ceremonies but sent her message. "I have been to prison. The only reason for all this suffering is because we wrote about corruption in Khartuom."

In the latest issue of the IWMFWire, Ammu Joseph wrote a piece titled "Women, War and the Media." She said that the gender angle to war coverage cannot be seen exclusively in terms of reports on violations of women's right to physical security. It needs also to take into account women's heightened experience of violence and trauma during periods of conflict—both physical and psychological, both within the home and outside of it. If women hold up the sky during peacetime, she stressed, they hold up even more of it during wartime. "This surely is a fact that the media has a responsibility to recognize and report. One way to begin is to acknowledge women as legitimate and vital sources of information as well as insight even in the context of war."

Looking from the outside

YOUNGBLOOD

Leikha M. Mulsid

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—***Ed.***

LIFE takes on a different shape when you look at it from the outside. Things familiar and common, what we take for granted every day stare at you in a different way. Perspectives change and a whole new world pops up at the least expected moments and places.

Last year I left for Europe to pursue graduate studies. Having lived a sheltered and protected life for a quarter of a century, living alone came as a whiff of fresh air for my spirit. I welcomed it and how I thrived in it! What started out as a simple journey of youthful adventure and discovery opened my eyes and heart to the basics of life.

Upon my return, I did realize or expect the changes that greeted my rose-tinted glasses. Re-adjusting to the lenses that I left behind was difficult—surprising at the very least. And this was when little things sprang to life and made me realize how life here in our country can be so comfortable but also complicated.

Take, for example, walking. In my first few weeks in Holland, I would not think twice of taking the tram, bus or even a taxi to get to my destination. I had brought with me the "convenience" culture from home. Here in the Philippines, we take a taxi for convenience and comfort, even if we are just going a short distance. This was a habit I shared with new friends, especially Asians.

Weeks later I realized how "spoiled" we were when I noted that a tram or bus ride, which cost the equivalent of P40 to P50, could buy me five kilos of meat in some countries. We always hear about how one cup of coffee at Starbucks could feed a whole family in some developing countries, but seldom does it hit home with us. This realization struck me to the core.

Upon returning home, I compared the cost of living between living in Holland and in the Philippines and I was surprised to learn that it was actually more expensive to live here! A thousand pesos worth of groceries and food would last me two weeks in Holland, but what does the same amount get you in the grocery here today?

I surmised that life is costlier here because of our culture. We go out, eat out, entertain ourselves and others and hang out in coffee places, bars, restaurants and even malls. Thus, the emergence of places like Rockwell and Eastwood, aside from our mushrooming supermalls and the like. We put too much emphasis on image, status, trends, on being seen in the "in' places.

Have you ever noticed that people ask "Where do you work?" rather than "What do you do?" We have a tendency to discriminate and judge people according to their work, connections and even how they look. We are quite a "*pa-porma*" society, and it would do us a lot to remember the lesson the Little Prince imparts: "What is essential is invisible to the eye."

We Filipinos are a jolly lot. We love to party. And this was quite evident in our graduate-school community where Filipino students were often behind activities, parties and what have you. Filipinos always find a reason to celebrate—be it a birthday, the end of an exam, or simply meeting up with friends that turns into a party. And boy! How we love to cook and eat!

We always look at the bright side of things. This makes us resilient despite the adversities Filipinos face, individually and collectively as a nation.

Sometimes, however, these traits have a tendency to go out of hand. Filipino hospitality, for one. We have heard and probably experienced how people would put out the best for their guests, offering the most comfortable bed, the best part of the meal and other amenities and forgetting about themselves and tomorrow just so the visitor will have the best.

Giving *pasalubong* is another thing that is sometimes taken too far. Fellow students were surprised when Filipinos started to make an inventory of the gifts and tokens they would bring home to family, friends and officemates. They argued that as a student, you lived on a budget, had enough pressure to contend with ranging from studies to being away from home so you shouldn't have to worry about what *pasalubong* to give to this friend or this officemate.

Today when I am with friends, I often find myself taking a step back and trying to look at things with some detachment. And yes, I see things in a different light. Things that I was used to, the lifestyle and the concerns have somehow, changed or evolved.

Some will call this maturity and growth, saying the experience broadened my perspective and horizons. I see it simply as being able to recognize what are the important things in our lives.

Leikha M. Mulsid, 29, recently returned to the Philippines after completing a graduate program in the Hague, the Netherlands.

Changes

Melinda Cielo C. Mendoza

HOW would you feel if just when you thought everything is going all right—your admission to law school, a trip to Hong Kong as your graduation gift, the congratulations of relatives, a blow-out for your friends—you suddenly learn you still have an incomplete grade in one of your subjects and you can't graduate until you have completed it? When it happened to me I felt cold all over.

"*Hindi ka pa pwedeng grumadweyt*, Ms Mendoza," somebody in the registrar's office told me. "*May kulang ka pa.*"

I was devastated, confused, scared. How would I tell something like that to my parents? They expected so much from me and I didn't want to disappoint them. They knew I was graduating this year. Mother had already put my graduation picture beside hers. I had given away pictures to my friends. And now this, and this is reality.

How many of us are not afraid to accept reality? How many of us can deal with the changes in life? How many of us are willing to take risks?

In this changing world—dynamic and moving—people are searching for a place where everything is predictable, consistent, stable. They look for security and permanence whether at home, at work, in school, in their religion or in their relationships. But the truth is changes happen all the time. Time changes. People change. Fashion, cellular phones, rice cookers, even the color of the hair change. There is hardly any place on earth where nothing changes. Change is inevitable.

But no matter the changes in our lives, the important thing is to learn how to deal with them.

As I set aside the dream of going to law school, having a vacation in Hong Kong, partying all night and accept that my plans have changed, I must face the fact that there is something I must finish first. I have to accept that it's either I get a failing mark and stay another semester in my college, or I do what is necessary to pass the course, get my diploma and pick up where I left off in pursuit of my dreams. No matter what I feel, I have to accept this reality. In the meantime I have to give up my dreams and work on them some other time and bear the disappointment of my family.

Life goes on. There will be more changes along the way. But the thrill of life lies in how you deal with them.

Three moments in the Filipino's life

THEY stood on a stage where calls for prayer and peaceful change used to be made. They stood on a stage just beneath the statue of a Virgin of Purity and Peace. They stood on a stage where dreams were born and ushered on to reality. They stood on a stage where Filipinos moved not only with reverence but in holy fear of the God of truth, justice and peace.

That stage flowed from and into a street after which it takes its name. That stage was witness to many a divine epiphanies. Those epiphanies were partly humanly engendered but with outcomes not less than divine. Those special epiphanies blessed two months, the first being the month of hearts, the second the month of promise. We remember those faithful days of Feb. 22 to 25, 1986 and Jan. 16 to 20, 2001.

On those four days of February, a people accustomed to the empty, hypocritical rhetoric of a fading dictator, collectively smashed the last surviving walls of his crumbling fortress. On the 25th, as word of the dictator and his family's flight reached a harried but not hapless crowd, there was ecstatic and cathartic pandemonium transforming a street into yet another happy epiphany.

Another four days were to become special. They were four days of last year's January, the first month of the year, and expectedly the month of promise. The evening of the 16th calls to mind an infamous envelope and 11 senators who voted to keep it sealed in a desperate act to conceal the truth about their beloved friend and benefactor. There was dancing not by a crowd but by a lady who is not only an embarrassment to the institution she represents but to the family of her heroic brother as well. Many young people rushed to the now famous stage and began to swell their numbers in the next four days. It was a veritable and felicitous déjà vu except now on a convenient platform or stage. From this stage on the 20th an expectant crowd was to break into joyful and grateful shouting and tears upon hearing news that another unwanted leader and his family had fled.

It has been a year since friends of a fallen president stood on the same stage to demand and pray, with fake reverence and devotion, for his return. They will remember their week of eating, shouting and merriment that culminated in a march that quickly became a siege. Yes, there were lots of people and more food and entertainment to sustain them. There were lots of hope too for the wrong things and a frightful expense of misdirected energy to do uglier things.

These three moments in the life of our people are but three faces that reflect the best and the worst in all of us. I wept at what they did to a noble and holy shrine. I continue to weep at what continues to prostitute, trivialize and brutalize the gentle epiphany of our hopes and dreams. Sadly, the acts of the ugly and un-Godly are creeping and spreading everywhere and no longer from and to a shrine called Edsa.

Shouldn't we have spent May 1 in a special way, remembering yes, but humbly praying for yet a truer and more lasting epiphany?

—FR. ROBERTO P. REYES,
Gomburza

A proposal without precedent

PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo favors the proposal to transfer Malacañang from Manila to Pampanga, an idea that was put forward by Pampanga Rep. Juan Pablo Bondoc.

Malacañang belongs to the entire Filipino people, from the Tausogs of the South to the Ivatans of the North. Out of *delicadeza*, Bondoc should have refrained from making this suggestion and President Macapagal should not have supported it.

From the time of Manuel L. Quezon, the first Filipino president to occupy Malacañang in 1935 until the administration of President Joseph Estrada, nobody dared to propose the transfer of Malacañang to their respective provinces.

In 1814, the British forces burned the Capitol and the White House, but US President James Madison did not rebuild it in Port Conway, Virginia, where he was born. Not one among the American presidents has proposed to transfer the White House elsewhere.

—ELIGIO M. PASTORIN, 92
Paraiso St., Parang, Marikina City

PNP presence in public toilets

THIS is in reference to the front-page photo about the Pagcor public pay toilet project which appeared in your newspaper last April 25, 2002.

The caption asked about PNP Director-General Leandro Mendoza's involvement in the project. We are happy to report that the good general has indeed been collaborating with the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. on the construction of these first-class public pay toilets. Under Pagcor's Memorandum of Agreement with the Philippine National Police, Metropolitan Manila Development Authority and Metro Manila mayors, family members of retired policemen will be manning and maintaining these pay toilets to prevent vandalism and to keep them clean at all times. In return, they will be getting 40 percent of the proceeds. Moreover, PNP personnel will secure the premises on a 24-hour basis.

It is a very novel way of helping the families of our policemen who have, incidentally, expressed enthusiasm about the project. We are initially eyeing 10 key sites in Metro Manila. The PNP dependents will be busy in a very productive way and, of course, our commuting public will be relieved beyond compare, no pun intended.

Pagcor's public pay toilets answer the long-felt need to improve public sanitation in the metropolis as well as promote the health and well-being of commuters and pedestrians, especially the women who cannot answer the call of nature just anywhere. Our public pay toilets are patterned after those of First World countries with automatic flush systems, telephones and vendo machines. The usage fee will be very minimal and will go to the structures' maintenance. How else can you keep them spanking clean? We believe a noteworthy project like this deserves our support.

—GRYK ORTALEZA, PR and advertising director, Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp., Pagcor House, 1330 Roxas Blvd., Ermita, Manila

Alternative tourism

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

ST. Augustine once wrote, "The world is a book and those who do not travel read only a page."

I couldn't agree more. It's always tempting to just watch Lakbay TV and Discovery channel, but seeing a place for yourself is always different. Lakbay TV would agree as well; their travelogues are meant to entice you to see the "real thing," where you can treat yourself to more vivid sensory delights.

How much you get from the trip depends though on how you go about as a tourist. I'm dismayed by the many travel stories we see these days in newspapers and magazines, emphasizing luxurious resorts and shopping. The come-on used in these stories is that you'll feel just like you never left home, which doesn't really make too much sense. Why spend money to go to a place like home?

Why go to Bali for example, to watch HBO? Or to Beijing to eat at McDonald's? Yet that's what often happens. Filipinos are usually conservative when it comes to exploring new places and trying out new experiences.

Patronizing McDonald's in Beijing isn't half as bad as this compulsion to go off to another country just to shop for fake brand-name products. Yet that's all you read about these days in local papers: how fake Rolex watches and Fendi bags are now cheaper in Shanghai than in Bangkok.

Mind you, I enjoy looking at all the imitation products, but I consider all that only as part of a broader alternative "tourist" agenda. The fake products amuse me because in a way it's the Third World getting back at developed countries, almost making fun of this brand-name hysteria. In socialist China, especially, there is irony in the way people come up to you touting all these icons of the decadent capitalist West: "Lolek, Lolek" (Rolex, Rolex) and "CD, CD." I don't know if Chairman Mao's turning in his grave—if he does, it's probably more with the way the vendors sell Loleks next to Mao watches, the latter showing the chairman on the dial, waving to unseen multitudes.

My point is that the fake brand-name markets can be fun, but it shouldn't dominate your life as a tourist. There are hundreds of places and activities that beckon, museums and parks (and I mean botanical gardens, not theme parks) that can take days to finish. And don't forget, even casual strolling through the streets can open new worlds as you try local restaurants, coffee shops, even discos.

Now if you really feel you have to shop, then at least go to local markets or even groceries. Chinese groceries are paradise for gourmets, even for vegetarians like myself. I went wild in a Shanghai grocery because of the variety of vegetables, mushrooms, condiments, spices. Pine nuts for pesto, which cost $10 a pound in the West, cost about $2 a kilo.

Looking for alternative gifts? Chinese cities usually have a street or two selling cheap (and fake) antiques that make better *pasalubong* than cheap (and fake) brand-name products.

Learn to count in the local language, and get the words for "how much" and "too expensive." In the Visayas and Mindanao, starting off with "*Pila?*" rather than "*Magkano?*" can mean you start off with local prices rather than the ones intended for gullible Manila tourists.

Don't stop with the words for shopping. Simple greetings and of course, "thank you," generate goodwill wherever you go. Remember that local people may also find you "exotic" and that for this "E.T." to speak their language encourages people to open their hearts, minds, even their homes. Once in Salvador, Brazil, I had a shopkeeper who invited me home for dinner, even if I hadn't bought anything, because she wanted her family to meet this *chinito* Filipino who she thought was Japanese-Brazilian because he spoke funny Portuguese.

Don't worry if you run out of words. Body language can be challenging—sometimes you emerge triumphant as you get your message through, and even if you don't, there's camaraderie as everyone breaks out laughing during those moments of total incomprehension.

What about safety problems? I'm afraid the ones who get mugged are those who are so obviously tourists, i.e., those who come out of the five-star hotels and luxury resorts, lugging around their cameras and laptops and binoculars, those who stare and point and make fun of local people, talking and laughing a bit too loudly. It's sad but Filipinos are quickly catching up with the Americans and Japanese in terms of being "ugly tourists."

Tourism always tempts arrogance. We think that we can do anything we want to do because we paid thousands of pesos or dollars for the trip, forgetting that no matter how much we've spent, we are still guests, granted the privilege to visit and share a bit of local bounties.

Alternative tourism starts out with our wanting to read the book, as St. Augustine would have put it. We go with our children to new places, so that we can all learn to go beyond tolerance and appreciate cultural diversity, whether in terms of tasting new foods, or understanding other people's faiths.

It's useful to remember simple guidelines from eco-tourism: take nothing but pictures (and even then I'd ask for permission and not be too intrusive), leave nothing but footprints (and goodwill), kill nothing but time.

* * *

Comments to miguel@pinoykasi.net

Arab visitors wrongly labeled as terrorists

THIS refers to the news reports filed by Vincent Cabreza, titled "5 Arab men deported by BID" and "5 Arabs not deported, says Aviation Security Group," which appeared on April 6 and April 7, respectively, in your widely read newspaper. These were about five Arabs with suspected links to terrorist groups who were deported after taking aerial footage of a popular tourist resort in Baguio City.

The implication of these false reports on some Saudis visiting your country does not speak well of the existing friendly relations between our two countries. Therefore, and in order for the truth to prevail, I would like to state the following:

First, these news items reflect the vicious and unfriendly campaign against the Arabs which I very much regret especially since it appeared in a widely circulated and friendly newspaper like the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

Second, the passengers referred to as terrorists are actually three Saudi nationals. One is a highly respected professor at the Islamic University of Imam Mohammad bin Saud in Riyadh who happened to be visiting the Philippines for the first time. Another is a businessman who came along with the professor from Saudi Arabia. In fact, he was the one who persuaded the professor to visit the Philippines in order to see the natural beauty of this country. The third is a Saudi national residing permanently in the Philippines who is married to a Filipina. The three went to Baguio upon the invitation of an accredited Islamic institute there and at the same time to see the lovely City of Pines.

Third, I want to report with regret that many Saudis are hesitating to visit this beautiful country because of fear of being subjected to similar provocations. It is, therefore, my duty to urge the media to seek the truth and avoid sensationalizing their reports, but rather concentrate their efforts on the promotion of their country's relations with friendly countries like Saudi Arabia. I hate to see Saudis thinking twice before coming to the Philippines because this will be in conflict with the endless efforts that both countries have been exerting to strengthen the existing relations between them and their peoples.

—SALEH MOH'D.AL-GHAMDI, ambassador, Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia, Manila

THE STORY about five Middle Eastern men accosted here by 30 government agents and police officers—which I wrote, and which was dispatched to the Manila desk by the Northern Luzon Bureau on April 5—never described the foreigners as terrorists.

My story was merged with a paragraph or two of a wire report from the French news agency, Agence France Presse, written by a Baguio-based stringer, Artemio Dumlao. It was Dumlao's report, which labeled them terrorists and which falsely reported their deportation. In fact, I wrote the second story, "5 Arabs not deported, says ASG," precisely to correct the AFP report, because I was the only reporter on the scene. I also tracked down the Saudi professor's destination here and spoke to his hosts. They were quoted in the stories I wrote.

—VINCENT CABREZA, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Nothing irregular in UP bar review

TO SET the record straight and for fairness sake, I would like to make certain clarifications on the letter of V.C. Cadangen last April 24, 2002, titled "Questions of propriety in UP bar review classes."

When I was selected as one of the examiners in the 2001 bar examinations, and in compliance with pertinent guidelines, I took a leave of absence from the UP College of Law as a professorial lecturer for the pertinent period, and also as a bar reviewer in the UP Law Center. Thus, I never lectured or participated in any review class, whether regular or advanced.

If the UP Law Center distributed review materials which included those prepared by me, I would like to assure all concerned that these came from old files prepared in previous years when I was not yet a bar examiner. Moreover, the questions for the 2001 bar examinations which I prepared were new and they were kept strictly confidential.

If despite our efforts to keep our identities as bar examiners strictly confidential, people still guess or speculate on who the bar examiners are for any given year, that is something beyond our control. But the process of selecting competent bar examiners must go on.

I trust that this matter has been clarified.

—SAMILO N. BARLONGAY, 31 Dahlia St., Araneta University Village, Malabon City

IF you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of news and photos by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue, corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, City of Makati or send a fax to Nos. 897-4793, 897-4794, or e-mail readersadvocate@ inquirer.com.ph

Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

Excommunication explained

I AM writing to make a clarification on the news article "Local Church sets protocol on priests' conduct" by Armand Nocum last April 28.

The Church is taking cases of sexual misconduct seriously and the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines' Episcopal Commission on the Clergy is indeed preparing a protocol. However, I would wish to clarify the matter on excommunication. Canon Law states that if a cleric attempts marriage, even if only civilly, he incurs a *latae sententiae* suspension. If after warning, he does not reform and continues to give scandal, other penalties, including dismissal from the clerical state, may be imposed.

Latae sententiae suspension is different from excommunication, which may also be *latae sententiae*. The term means the penalty is incurred automatically upon the commission of an offense. It is *ipso facto* attached to the law.

—MSGR. HERNANDO M. CORONEL, secretary general, Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, 470 General Luna St., Intramuros, Manila

Officials trying to cover up murder of journalist

THE FEDERATION of Reporters for Empowerment and Equality (FREE-Cotabato chapter), a group of Mindanao-based reporters and correspondents of different national and international media outlets, expresses its collective anguish over the untimely death of one of our colleagues, Benjaline Hernandez.

The April 5 brutal murder of Hernandez, who was vice president for Mindanao of the College Editors Guild of the Philippines, and three other community members, put in question the professionalism of our soldiers and the sincerity of the Macapagal administration in seeking peace in Mindanao. Worse, the suspects, who belong to the Special Forces of the Philippine Army and paramilitary group based in Arakan, Cotabato, remain free.

We are also saddened by the reaction and position of some local political leaders who, even without an investigation conducted by proper authorities like the National Bureau of Investigation, have justified the barbarous actions of the soldiers and militias by quickly linking the victims to the New People's Army.

In an obvious attempt to conceal the truth behind Hernandez's death, these government officials, like the military officers whose men were responsible for the gruesome slaughter of the victims, want to establish that the slain civilians were killed during a "legitimate encounter" between government troopers and rebels. Some of these officials must have mastered the art of alibi for the use of a similar kind of lie to cover up the killings of several people in Patadon, Matalam, last Feb. 17.

Our commitment to our profession obliges us to risk our own lives to get first-hand accounts of the communities, mingling with people of various political orientation and ideologies in search for truth and justice.

We believe that Hernandez, motivated by her ardent desire to unearth the truth behind the series of military operations that victimized innocent civilians, risked her life by going to the remote areas of Arakan.

We believe that the death of Hernandez is part of a systematic effort of some greedy politicians to muzzle the media so that the economic and political interests behind the killings and massacres in Arakan, which the victim could have exposed, will be kept away from the public eye.

The death of Hernandez is a threat to all of us in the profession. After her death, who is next? It makes us shiver every time we recall that tragic moment. Someday it might also happen to one of us and the military and local officials will justify it as a legitimate encounter or brand us as rebels or, worse, terrorists.

As we celebrate journalism month in May, we join the call of the human rights groups for the immediate recall of the members of the Special Forces and paramilitary groups involved in the Kinawayan massacre, pending the results of an investigation by an independent fact-finding body.

We join the Diocese of Kidapawan in appealing for a speedy and impartial investigation on the Patadon massacre and the immediate relief of the regional director, provincial director and others who were involved in the massacre.

We call on the people to be more vigilant in light of the resurgence of human rights violations by those in power, which is reminiscent of the martial law years.

Hernandez, at the young age of 22, offered her life in the pursuit of truth and justice for the deprived, oppressed, marginalized and voiceless people. To honor her martyrdom, we must continue fighting for her cause for a just and free society.

Justice for Benjaline Hernandez and the Patadon massacre victims!

Justice to all victims of human rights violations!

—MEL ENDRINA, spokesperson, Federation of Reporters for Empowerment and Equality (FREE-Mindanao)

40,000 march vs GMA in Metro; leaders say cops blocked protesters

From page A1

trict director, said the pro-Estrada People's Movement Against Poverty and its allies mustered eight to 10,000 supporters at Mendiola.

"The protests have been very peaceful. We did not have any untoward incident. I thank the leaders of the different organizations for their cooperation," Aglipay said.

He said that protest leaders had coordinated with the police, but pro-Estrada groups and Sanlakas complained that some of their delegations from the provinces were blocked from entering Metro Manila. Aglipay said he did not know about it. ***(See banner story on Page A1.)***

Provincial rallies

Of demonstrations outside Metro Manila, one of the largest was in Naga City. Some 6,000 members of militant groups in Camarines Sur yesterday called for the ouster of President Macapagal-Arroyo amid greater poverty brought about, they said, by liberal economic policies and creeping militarization in the countryside.

For the first time in 16 years, the militant organizations of labor, peasants, public employees, laborers and transport workers, turned the main streets in Naga red with flags and placards.

A similar activity was also held in Legazpi City.

In Lucena City, at least 200 ralliers belonging to several workers' groups held their own Labor Day protest demonstration.

Ronny Olayte, Bayan-Quezon spokesperson, said workers from La Tondeña, JAC Liner Bus Co. and former workers of the Pagbilao power plant joined the activity.

Workers affiliated with the Solidarity of Cavite Workers (SCW) made their own Labor Day commemoration by staging protest rallies on Tuesday and yesterday at the Cavite Export Processing Zone area.

In Metro Manila, it was "worker power" all the way. But though they were one in denouncing the Macapagal administration, various groups fought for possession of the Don Chino Roces Bridge.

Labor issues

Members of the Sanlakas, Bukluran ng Manggagawang Pilipino and the Partido Sosyalistang Paggawa gathered on Padre Faura Street corner Taft Avenue near the Supreme Court at around 10 a.m.

The group began by denouncing the High Tribunal after one of its divisions upheld the legality of the suspension of the collective bargaining agreement of the Philippine Airlines employees.

An affiliate organization, the Kongreso ng Pagkakaisa ng Maralitang Lungsod, picketed the United States Embassy to protest the presence of American troops in the country.

The Sanlakas group marched to Mendiola around 2 p.m.

But they were blocked at the Ayala Bridge by the police because the pro-Estrada People's Movement Against Poverty had gone 45 minutes beyond its scheduled stay in Mendiola.

The group, whose members lined Ayala Bridge to T.M. Kalaw Street, reached Mendiola at around 3:30 p.m. The planned convergence of PMAP and Sanlakas was canceled.

"Despite the two groups' differences on Estrada, that must not be a hindrance to forging unity regarding gut issues facing workers and the poor," BMP president Victor Briz said.

Meanwhile, another large group led by the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan and the Kilusang Mayo Uno began marching to Mendiola around 3 p.m. The protesters filled the eastbound lane of C.M. Recto Avenue to the foot of the Quiapo Bridge. The Bayan members reached Mendiola around 5 p.m.

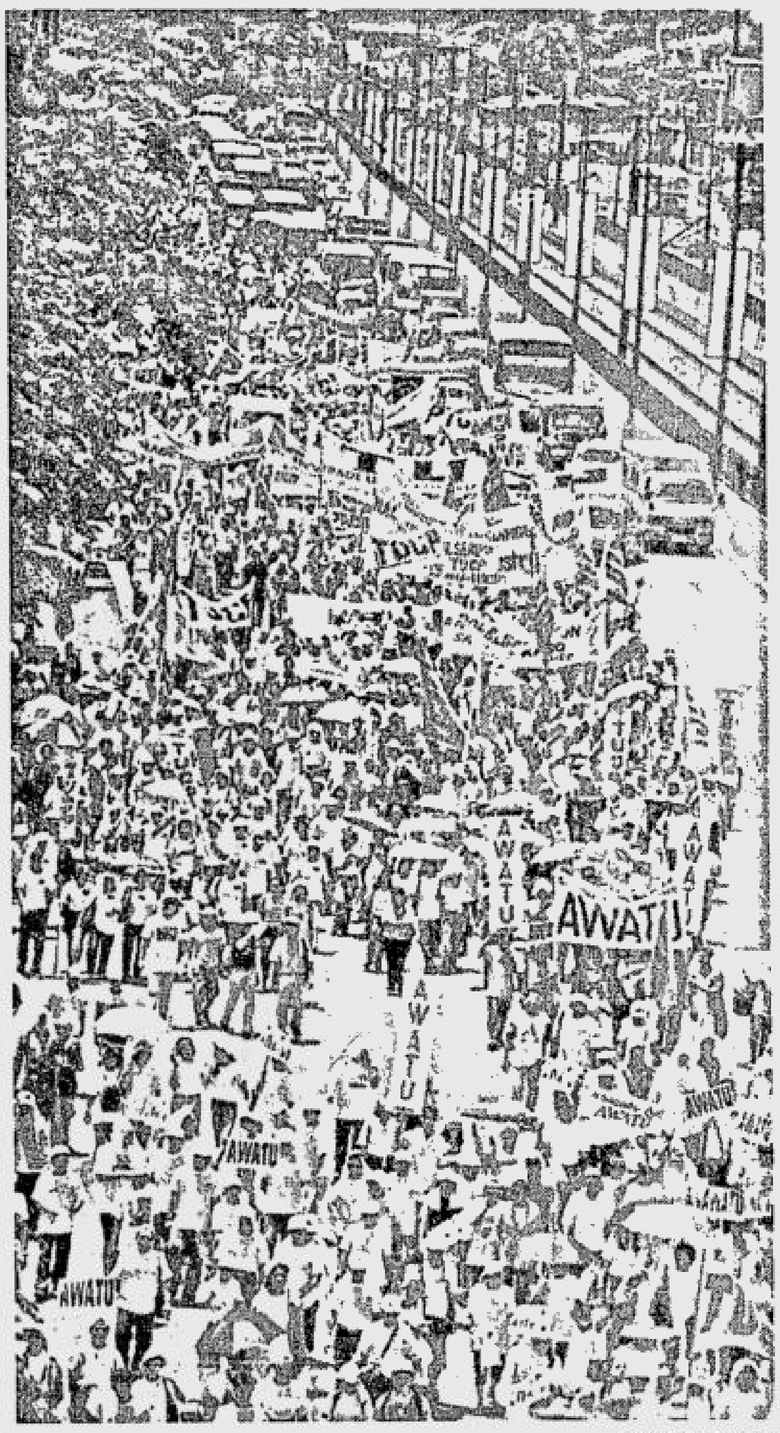
The group formally declared the start of its ouster campaign against the President. Bayan secretary general Teodoro Casiño said yesterday was the "start of the end of the Arroyo regime."

But in a television interview last night, President Macapagal-Arroyo said that while she was grateful for the peaceful rallies, she really had nothing much to say to the left-of-center groups calling for her ouster.

"They don't have much support anyway," she said in Filipino. "I don't have much to say to the militant groups because they have a different ideology," she added. ***With a report from Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

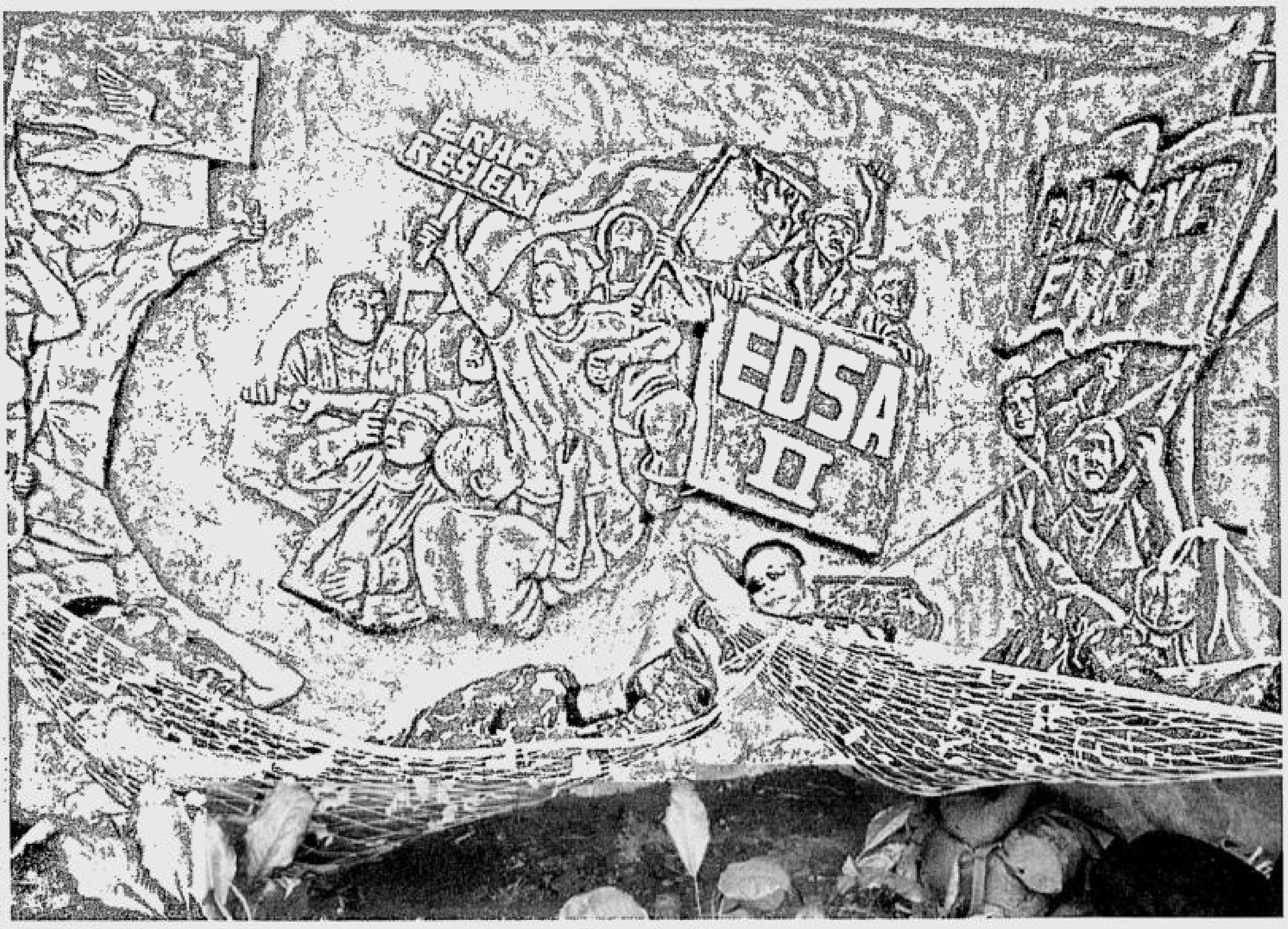
CHECKPOINTS turned into barricades. This one is at the Canlubang exit of the South Expressway where jeeploads of anti-government demonstrators are stopped.

VAL HANDUMON



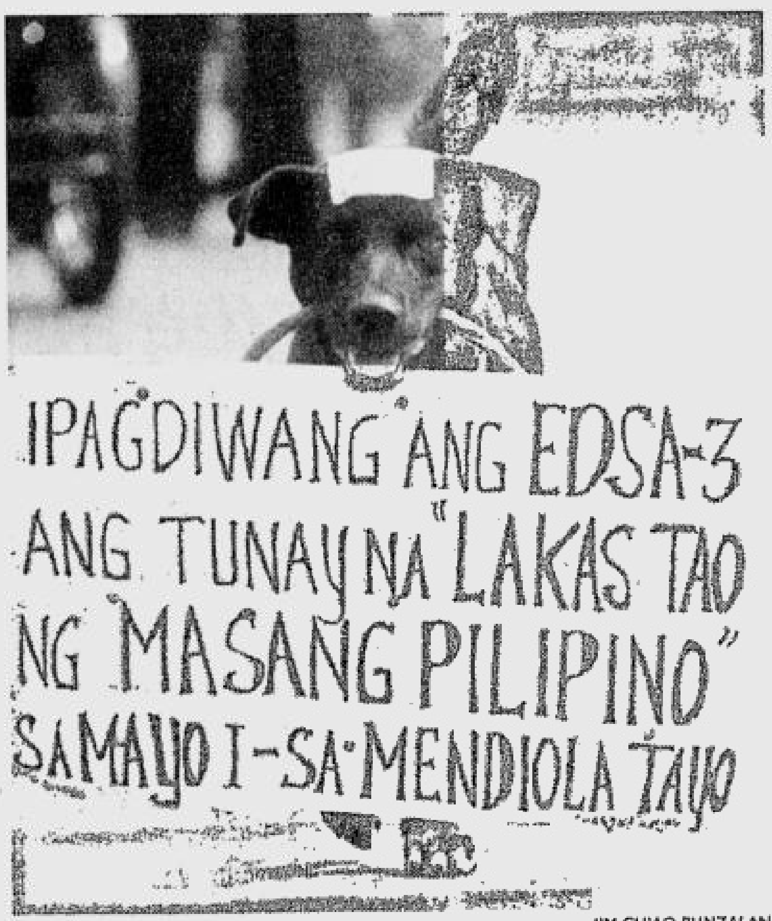
DENNIS SABANGAN

THE MODERATE TUCP on the way to the Araneta Coliseum.



THE EDSA Shrine is off limits to demonstrators. Cops are all over the place.

ERNIE U. SARMIENTO



JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

GIMMICKS galore to grab attention to the cause.

Rosy promises . . .

From page A1

reducing the PPA through a refinancing scheme.

- Urged the Energy Regulatory Commission to audit the PPA collections of Meralco.
- Any adjustment in wages can be done either through the tripartite regional wage boards or by Congress which can legislate a new minimum wage. She noted that last year the wage boards passed 11 wage increase orders.
- Ordered Interior Secretary Jose Lina to intensify the manhunt for Roger de la Torre (aka Ka Raul),the suspected killer of labor leader Filemon Lagman last year.
- Announced the appointment of former Sen. Ernesto "Boy" Herrera as presidential adviser for safety nets.

He will be in charge of ensuring that safety nets are in place to cushion the adverse effects on the economy caused by globalization.

- Pledged support for the early passage of a bill granting dual citizenship to overseas Filipino workers.
- To dispatch social workers and doctors to foreign countries to provide counseling and medical services to Filipino overseas workers.
- Ordered a study on the feasibility of forming "joint inspection teams" composed of labor officials and worker-representatives to ensure that companies are following labor laws.
- To increase the number of rolling stores by the National Food Authority and Metro Manila Development Authority so the poor can have more access to cheap-priced commodities like rice and medicines.
- To increase the number of government hospitals and health care centers offering essential medicines at a 50-percent discount.
- To put up 20,000 affordable housing units for workers by using properties foreclosed by government financial institutions.
- Ordered the Department of Labor to set up "quick reaction teams" to help laid off workers find new jobs.

Stars, door prizes for pro-Gloria crowd

From page A1

grams: P1.7 million for urban poor communities in Manila; P162,360 for the Sirach Community Outreach Association in Caloocan, and P12.5 million for the Sugar Industry Federation.

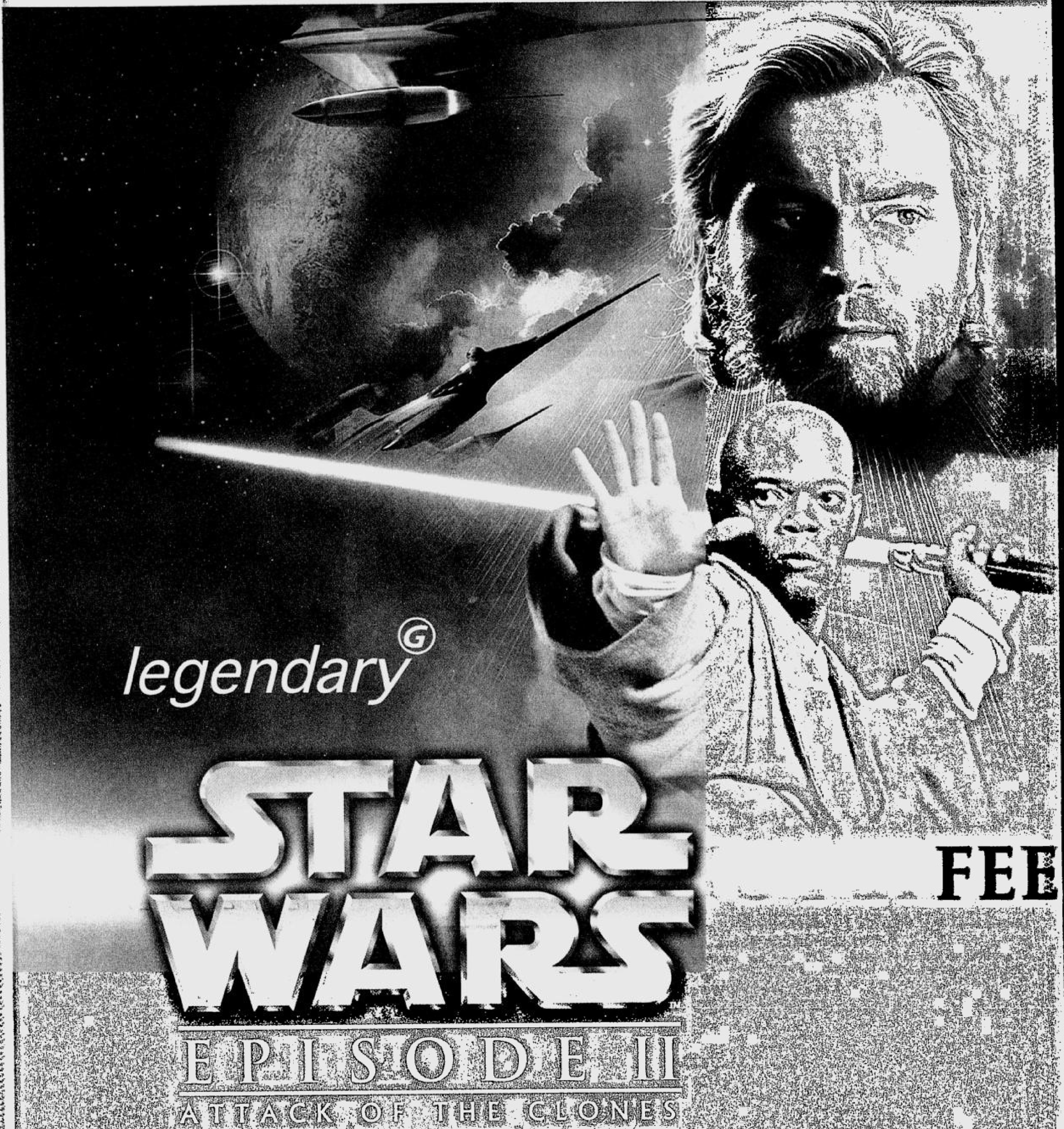
Then, after delivering her keynote speech, the President sang a duet with movie superstar Nora Aunor, offering their version of a '70s song entitled "Ikaw ang Superstar ng Buhay Ko."

In her speech, Ms Macapagal had said there was only one superstar for her: the "great Filipino worker."

The duet was part of the concert dubbed "Handog sa Pilipinong Manggagawa" organized by the government-sequestered television network Channel 13 and entertainment companies Viva and Vicor.

The lineup of performers for the concert read like the call sheet of a television variety show. It included Cris Villongco, Roselle Nava, Leo Martinez, Giselle Sanchez, Rico Puno, April Boy Regino, Angelu de Leon, Dingdong Dantes, Jeremiah, Angelika de la Cruz, Maui Taylor, Jessa Zaragosa and husband Dingdong Avanzado, Victor Wood, Claire de la Fuente, Eva Eugenio and Judy Ann Santos.

Despite the scripted nature of the program, the President's staff forgot to include a mention of the Parola titling issue—an omission which the President rectified in a television interview last night. She said she will also issue a proclamation to pave the way for the distribution to the urban poor of an additional portion of Parola, in the Port Area of Manila.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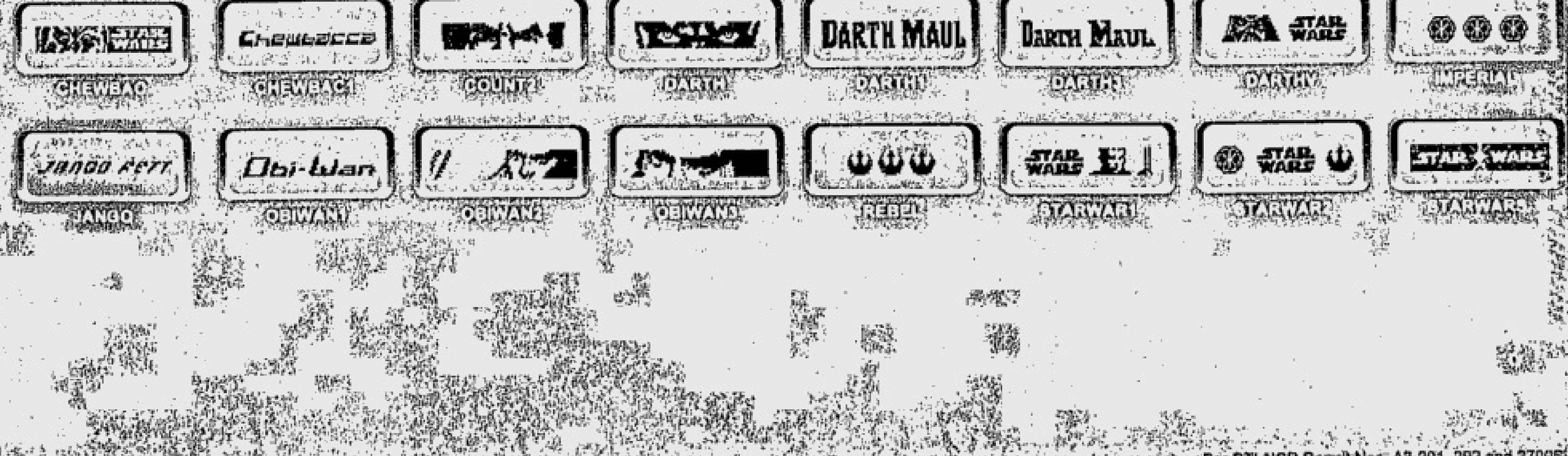
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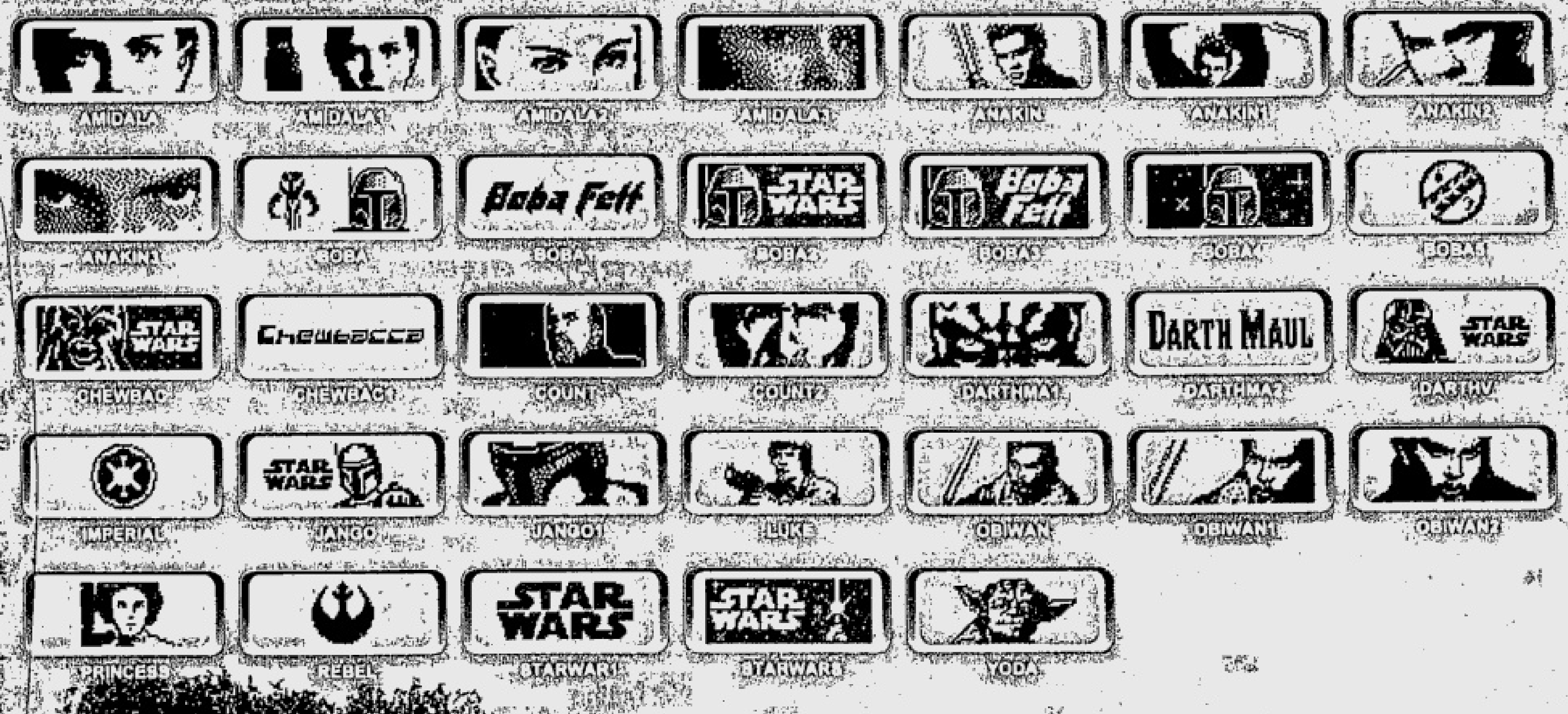

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

26 Palestinians leave Bethlehem church

BETHLEHEM, West Bank—Despite freedom for 26 Palestinians trapped in the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, the standoff between Israelis outside and gunmen inside remained unresolved, and Israel and the United Nations were deadlocked over a probe into the bloody battle at the Jenin refugee camp.

In Ramallah, the end of Israel's monthlong siege on Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's office appeared in sight. British and US officials met Palestinian negotiators late Tuesday to discuss procedures for transferring six Palestinians wanted by Israel to a Palestinian prison in Jericho, a desert oasis town.

The six have been holed up with Arafat and about 300 people since Israel's invasion March 29. In a lightning trial at the compound with police as judges, four were convicted of assassinating Israeli Cabinet minister Rehavam Zeevi last October. The other two are Ahmed Saadat, leader of the radical faction that carried out the assassination, and Fouad Shubaki, alleged mastermind of a seaborne Palestinian arms shipment intercepted by the Israeli navy in January.

Israel had demanded their surrender, but agreed to a US plan to allow their imprisonment in Jericho, to be monitored by British and US officials. An Israeli official said the siege on Arafat's office would be lifted only when the six prisoners are in the Jericho jail.

In Gaza, three Palestinians, including a 2-year-old girl, were killed when Israeli tanks opened fire near the Gaza-Egypt border late Tuesday, witnesses and a Palestinian doctor said. Israeli military sources said militants set off an explosive and soldiers fired a tank shell, hitting one of the bombers. Exchanges of fire continued as Israeli tanks moved into the Rafah refugee camp, residents said.

The Israeli army, meanwhile, completed its withdrawal from the West Bank city of Hebron, the military said early Wednesday, after a two-day operation in which nine Palestinians were killed. Before pulling out, soldiers arrested Loi Kafisha, a militia leader Israel charges with responsibility for several attacks. According to Israeli media, he was hiding in a local hospital and tried to escape disguised as a doctor.

The military said that soldiers and agents arrested 150 Palestinians in Hebron, including 52 on Israel's wanted list, and confiscated arms and explosives.

The 26 Palestinians emerged from the surrounded Church of the Nativity one by one, accompanied by Father Ibrahim Faltas, who is in charge of the church. They were taken to an Israeli bus, where a soldier checked their names and offered each one an orange.

Several hours later, 24 were released at nearby Beit Jalla hospital, witnesses said. A senior Palestinian security officer was freed earlier, and the other Palestinian, removed from the church on a stretcher, was taken to an Israeli hospital for treatment, the army said.

However, Israel and the Palestinians were digging in on their opposing positions regarding about 30 gunmen still in the church. Israel insisted that they either surrender or accept exile; the Palestinians proposed that they be taken to Gaza.

About 200 people remain inside the church, including Palestinian gunmen, policemen and civilians—along with Christian clerics, monks and nuns who said they are staying put to protect the shrine. *AP*

MAY DAY AP/REUTERS

Korean workers shout slogans under their company flags during an anti-government rally in Seoul while German leftist demonstrators flash the victory sign in front of riot police in Berlin as millions of workers the world over celebrated Labor Day Wednesday with demands for better working conditions and more pay.

UN chief to disband Jenin probe mission

UNITED NATIONS—Facing strong Israeli objections, Secretary General Kofi Annan said Tuesday he is "inclined to disband" a UN fact-finding team that was to look into Israel's military assault on the Jenin refugee camp.

Israel's security Cabinet decided Tuesday not to cooperate with a UN inquiry until six Israeli demands had been met regarding the mandate and composition of the team, which is now in Geneva. The team's departure for Israel has been delayed since Saturday by Israeli objections.

"Given the team's inability to proceed and the difficulties we have had, I was inclined to disband it," Annan said late Tuesday.

But he said he would wait for reaction from the Security Council, which will meet late Wednesday, before he formally calls the team back from Geneva.

"I will get some reaction from them (the council), take their counsel and move on from there," Annan said.

After two days of meetings last week between UN and Israeli officials, Annan said he wrote a letter to Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres in which "I felt I clarified the issues and dealt with their concerns, but evidently that was not the case.

Annan said he chose the three-member team with the view "that it was extremely important to find out what happened (in Jenin)."

"There are lots of accusations, lots of rumors. We don't know what is true and what is not. And I really felt that it was in everyone's interest that we clarify this issue as quickly as possible," he said.

The Palestinians accuse the Israeli army of a massacre of civilians during eight days of fighting that left part of the Jenin camp in rubble. Israel says its army fought intense gun battles with Palestinian gunmen, who were the main victims, stressing that 26 suicide bombers came from Jenin.

The team and its advisers left very busy jobs to be part of the mission, Annan said. "In these circumstances, I cannot keep these gentlemen and women sitting in Geneva, and we will have to draw the consequences and take action." *AP*

Libya offers to pay victims of Lockerbie

WASHINGTON—Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi is prepared to offer compensation to relatives of those killed in the 1988 bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 in an apparent bid to end international sanctions against his country, a US newsweekly reported.

In the May 6 edition of Time, the magazine reported it had obtained a letter saying Gadhafi will make a "substantial formal offer" to compensate families of the 270 victims within a month.

The letter, dated April 23, was written by New York lawyer James P. Kreindler, who had been negotiating with senior Libyan leaders.

Gadhafi is reportedly willing to pay up to $3.5 billion, the magazine said.

In exchange Gadhafi is expected to seek a lifting of US sanctions and eventually a resumption of diplomatic relations with Washington, Time reported.

Gadhafi has insisted Libya had nothing to do with the destruction of Flight 103, which exploded Dec. 21, 1988, over Lockerbie, Scotland. *AFP*

Media await release of San Suu Kyi

RANGOON—All eyes were Wednesday on the lakeside residence of Aung San Suu Kyi, who is expected to emerge from house arrest soon to what many hope will be a new era of democratic reform in military-ruled Burma.

A delegation of foreign and local media was gathered on the road leading to the white-washed villa on University Drive, in anticipation that the 18-month-old restrictions will be lifted shortly.

A government source said Tuesday that arrangements were being made for the Nobel peace laureate to be freed "within a day or two."

United Nations envoy to Burma Razali Ismail, who made a four-day visit to Burma (formerly known as Myanmar) last week, also hinted in Kuala Lumpur that Suu Kyi's release could be imminent.

Since September 2000 the street that runs past the democracy leader's home—normally a busy thoroughfare—has been closed off to traffic and barbed-wire barricades erected to prevent unauthorized access.

But in recent days the neglected stretch of road has been a hive of activity as municipal crews patched up potholes and swept away rubbish and leaves, in apparent readiness for her to be freed.

In another indication of news in the offing, a high-ranking junta official, Brig. Gen. Than Tun who acts as the official liaison with Suu Kyi, made his first visit to the house in several months on Tuesday.

And plainclothes security officials outside the house said they had been told to be ready to lay on a motorcade for the democracy leader should she call for transport.

Over the past few days the ruling State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) has issued an unusual number of visas to the foreign media, who began to descend on neatly ordered Rangoon on Wednesday.

Journalist visas are normally difficult to obtain, but the Burma Embassy in Bangkok stayed open late on Tuesday to issue the permits before shutting for the May Day holiday. *AFP*

Pakistani president cruises to referendum win

ISLAMABAD—Pakistani military ruler Pervez Musharraf is cruising to an emphatic victory in a referendum to extend his presidency, according to partial results carried on the state-run media Wednesday.

The Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) said the general who took power in a coup in October 1999 had won more than 95 percent of the vote in the four provinces of Punjab, Sindh, Baluchistan and NWFP (Northwest Frontier Province).

In the largest city of Karachi, capital of Sindh province in the south, election commission results showed Musharraf had won 215,789 votes with 3,275 against, out of 552 polling stations.

In the capital Islamabad, the first major city to return its results, 92 percent of 211,587 votes cast were in Musharraf's favor, according to election officials.

Votes were tallied throughout the night but a final national outcome was not expected until later Wednesday or possibly Thursday.

Despite independent witness reports that irregularities such as multiple voting were common and at times encouraged by government workers, officials quoted on APP said the referendum was fair and transparent.

Initial results indicated the general was certain to win another five years as president, although the key turnout figure was still a matter of fierce debate.

Opposition parties called for a boycott of the referendum, saying the exercise was a farcical abuse of taxpayers' money, a blatant breach of the 1973 Constitution and an "open fraud." *AFP*

Le Pen success rouses French voters out of apathy

PARIS—Teachers and students are skipping class together to join massive street protests. Phones are ringing off the hooks at voter registration centers. Celebrities, philosophers, religious leaders and human rights groups are sharing the spotlight to talk politics.

While most French say they are fearful of Jean-Marie Le Pen's ultra-right policies, analysts say his stunning electoral success has a silver lining for French democracy. It has energized voters in what was widely forecast to be a sleepy race for the presidency.

"This election has been transformed into a vote to save democracy," said Marianne Benamou, a university professor who canceled classes to march with 40,000 others at an anti-Le Pen rally this week.

Le Pen, who is fiercely anti-immigration, has been the object of daily nationwide protests since he stunned France in the presidential primary April 21 and qualified for Sunday's runoff against conservative President Jacques Chirac.

France's sports stars, intellectuals and politicians of all stripes have endorsed Chirac.

On Tuesday, some 100 celebrities—including filmmaker Constantin Costa-Gavras and actress Laetitia Casta—gathered in front of the Pompidou Center, Paris' modern art museum, to urge voters to defeat Le Pen at the polls.

High-school students have been a driving force behind massive street rallies, declaring that though they didn't have the right to vote, they would make their voices heard.

"We need to demonstrate—and the people need to hear us," said 17-year-old protester Helene Daveau, who said teachers at her Paris high school authorized students to skip classes to attend protests.

"Our message has never been more important," Daveau said. She carried a small French flag and a sign that read: "Le Pen is not the solution."

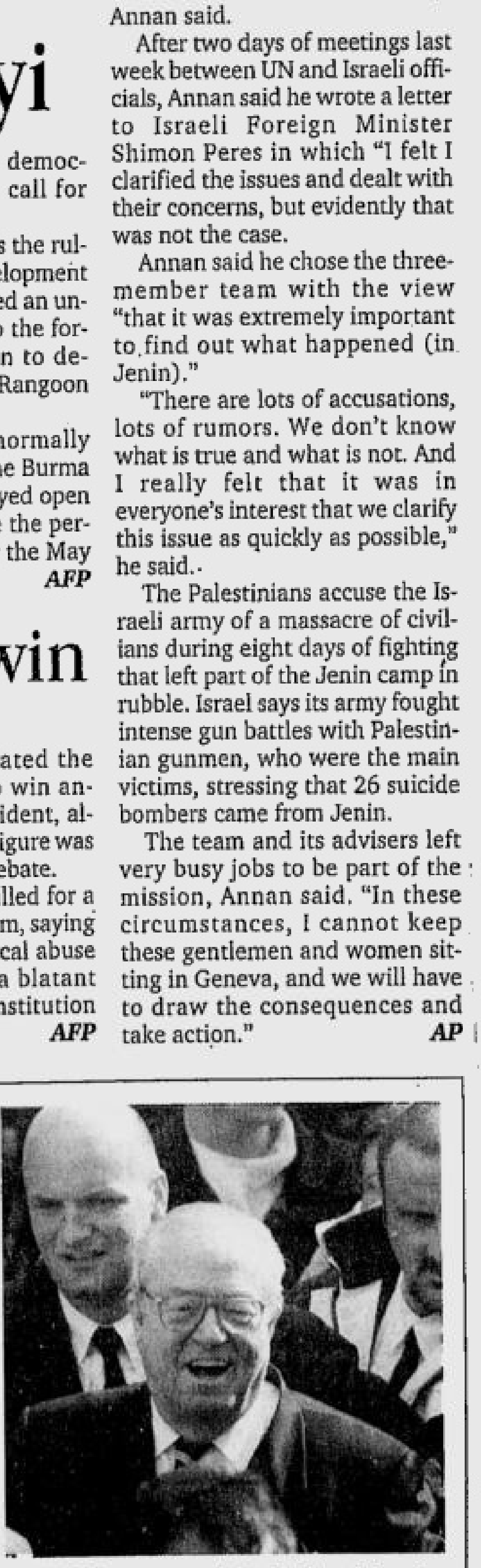
Protests were expected to come to during May Day marches. In Paris, some 3,500 police officers were to be deployed to keep opposing demonstrations apart.

Analysts say Le Pen's upset victory served as shock treatment to a complacent electorate.

"Suddenly people are realizing that you don't play with democracy—and that there is a point to voting," said Florence Faucher, a research director at the Center for the Study of French Political Life.

Boredom was the reigning sentiment in France ahead of elections. One daily newspaper, France Soir, ran a banner headline before the primary asking: "When Are You Going to Wake Us Up?"

All polls had indicated that the runoff would pit Chirac against Socialist Prime Minister Lionel Jospin—a repeat of the 1995 election. *AP*



FRENCH extreme-right National Front presidential candidate Jean-Marie Le Pen (center) works his way through a crowd of supporters during a march in Paris. REUTERS

Erap rally loses its Edsa III punch

From page A1

statement in Filipino read in part.

In the streets, his supporters turned Labor Day into a day of bashing President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Around 3,000 of them marched to the historic Don Chino Roces (formerly Mendiola) Bridge to demand the ouster of Ms Macapagal and the release of Estrada and Ronald Lumbao, leader of the People's Movement Against Poverty (PMAP), from detention.

Estrada spokesperson Jesus Crispin Remulla led the protesters in chanting "*Ibagsak ang tiyanak!*"

San Juan Mayor JV Ejercito, one of the ousted President's sons, also ridiculed Ms Macapagal's petite frame, saying in Filipino: "The prices of fuel, water and electricity have all gone up. Only one person has not gone up."

'Martyrs of Mendiola'

Estrada's supporters also displayed play money, a modified version of the proposed new P200 bill, when they began converging at the bridge from Sta. Mesa and the Welcome Rotonda at around 11:30 a.m. The play money bore the "money face (*mukhang pera*)" of the President.

PMAP spokesperson Arnold Obina said his group managed to achieve its target of mobilizing 10,000 people for the pro-Estrada rally.

He said there would have been a bigger number had not authorities blocked at least three busloads of supporters at the South Luzon Expressway.

Estrada himself lashed out briefly at the administration, but only in connection with the violent dispersal of his supporters who attacked Malacañang on May 1 last year.

But unlike in his previous media statements, his message carried neither reference to his trial nor any scathing remark against the Sandiganbayan or the Supreme Court, which he had accused of bias in hearing his cases.

"We all know how important this day is for the country's poor, for it was on this day last year that they moved as one to force an insensitive government to listen, as they lose hope of crawling out of poverty and of upholding the rule of law," he said.

"But to conceal the unkept promises of those in power, the ranks of the masses were forcibly and brutally broken up," he added.

He also said the siege of the Palace "no doubt showed how the poor can become an explosive force if further neglected by the government."

'Validation'

Linda Montayre, secretary general of the Philippine Consultative Assembly, said "the huge turnout (of protesters) validated the overwhelming support of the people" for the coalition advocating Ms Macapagal's ouster and Estrada's revocation of his "leave of absence" to pave the way for a parliamentary government.

Montayre told the INQUIRER that the coalition would lead a "more intensive and higher form of protest" that might escalate into a "civil disturbance" if the government would ignore its demands.

Dressed in red, Ejercito told the crowd that it was only his father who "gave honor and dignity to the Filipino people."

He began and ended his speech by leading the crowd in singing "Dakilang Lahi (A Great Race)," which he described as the theme song of the so-called "Edsa Tres."

Ejercito said yesterday's rally proved the legitimacy of "Edsa Tres" and showed that it was not his father's supporters who instigated the May 1 assault on Malacañang.

Lito Banayo, Estrada's former adviser on political affairs, said the economy and peace and order worsened under the Macapagal administration.

He said policemen nowadays were being forced to collect grease money because Sen. Panfilo Lacson was no longer the chief of the Philippine National Police.

He also said the prices of oil, power and water had been on a steep rise since Estrada's ouster. "So don't blame the masses if they can't take a bath," he added in Filipino.

Estrada's supporters also erected a makeshift shrine for Narciso Tinoc, Dong Visagar and Marlon Grabamar, who were killed during the May 1 siege of the Palace and whom they called "The Martyrs of Mendiola."

Members of the transport group PCDO-ACTO, Muslim Converts of the Philippines, Muslim Movement Against Poverty, Union of Masses for Democracy and Justice, and Filipino Democratic Students' Union were also among the protesters.

Estrada's supporters left the area at 2:40 p.m. to give way to members of Sanlakas and the Bukluran ng Manggagawang Pilipino, who were scheduled next to hold their own protest action there.

"Gloria is afraid," BMP president Victor Briz told the crowd. "She knows that the coalition of the poor and the workers can bring down a rotten system."

Lumbao

The PMAP's Lumbao, who harangued the teeming crowd of Estrada supporters at Edsa during the nightly protests that culminated in the attack on Malacañang, spent Labor Day at the PNP General Hospital where he has been confined since Friday night for high blood pressure.

But he sent a message to his comrades saying the prevailing political and economic problems could only be remedied with the establishment of a "pro-poor government."

He also said the PMAP and the Edsa Tres forces would join all sectors and organizations to achieve "genuine democracy and justice for all."

Lumbao has filed a motion with the Manila Regional Trial Court seeking transfer to another, less cramped detention cell on his discharge from the hospital. But he has to convince the court to do so.

"We can't do anything about that. That's the only detention center that the Intelligence Group has. We have to follow the order of Judge (Teresa) Soriaso to detain him there," said Senior Supt. Leonardo Espina.

But the PNP spokesperson admitted that the Intelligence Group's detention center was designed for detainees, not prisoners.

"We can't decide on that. It is the courts that decide where he should be detained. We just follow what the court orders us to do. If the court orders us to transfer him, we'll transfer him," Espina said.

In the motion filed by his lawyer on Monday, Lumbao likened his detention cell at the headquarters of the anti-terrorist Task Force Sanlahi in Camp Crame to "a dungeon" and sought to be transferred to the cell of the Anti-Carnapping Task Force.

Lumbao's wife Liza has described the cell as cramped and dark, and complained that he was being detained in a cell next to that of suspected Indonesian terrorist Fathur Rohman al-Ghozi.

Lumbao, who is facing charges of instigating the May 1 siege of Malacañang, was captured early Thursday last week after almost a year of hiding.

His blood pressure slightly rose to 150/100 from 150/90 on Tuesday, according to Espina.

"He is further advised to stay in the hospital. We will just wait for word from the chief of the hospital when he can be discharged and returned to his detention cell," Espina said.

Angara

Opposition Sen. Edgardo Angara cautioned the President against cracking down on legitimate opposition groups through harassment, intimidation and fabricated charges.

He issued the warning after disclosing to the media the other night a supposed "reliable intelligence report" indicating that he and Senator Lacson would be arrested for their alleged plan to mobilize a group of protesters to sow terror on Labor Day.

"If (the President) muzzles and harasses the democratic opposition, she will be planting the seeds of political instability," Angara said.

Lacson could not be reached for comment. ***With reports from TJ Burgonio and Cynthia D. Balana***

"PRICES of fuel, water and electricity have all gone up. One person has not gone up," San Juan Mayor JV Ejercito makes fun of the diminutive President Macapagal. JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

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GMA lampooned . . .

From page A1

which was delivered even before the club could perform its traditional skit lampooning the presidency and the government, still hit the club members where it hurt most. She talked about how the perennially cash-strapped NPC has made milking cows of the government and the private sector through the Gridiron.

"Actually I hate going to (gatherings) like this," she said half in jest.

"But unlike me, you are happy that I am here because you need me to make *hakot* (round up a crowd) for you. Not *hakot* the crowd, but *hakot* those who will buy the tickets to this dinner," she added.

She said government officials and private businessmen only buy tickets to the Gridiron because they are afraid of bad publicity from the press.

"After all these years, the NPC knows who are the usual milking cows," the President said.

"I'm like those milking cows from the government and private sector who buy (tickets to) your tables. I know you'll hit me even if I come. But you will hit me even more if I don't come, so I have to come," she said.

Pointing out several empty tables at the Manila Hotel's Fiesta Pavilion, Ms Macapagal said Cabinet officials and others guests did not even bother to attend Tuesday's gathering anymore since the show was going to be boring as usual.

"Look, there's no single Cabinet member here in this hall. See how wise they are. They have better things to do with their time," she said.

She probably forgot that Acting Press Secretary Silvestre Afable Jr. was around.

The President suggested that the media should also be subjected to a Malacañang-produced Gridiron that would portray the government as good and the press as bad.

She said the skit will have five acts: "envelopmental journalism," "why everybody wants to be a columnist," "how to be a publisher without really trying," "the AC-DC syndrome," and "the *kuryente* (bum steer) school of news writing."

Afable would provide the script, senior consultant Dante Ang the "emotional flourish" and adviser Conrado "Dodi" Limcaoco the "miscues," she said.

It was Ms Macapagal's second Gridiron as president. Last year it was held on April 24, the eve of the arrest of ousted President Joseph Estrada.

The Gridiron is the annual roast of the high and mighty by the press. It's a tradition of the American adopted by the Philippine press.

The NPC has been staging the Gridiron since the time of former President Elpidio Quirino. It was stopped during martial law.

This year's skit titled "The Iron Lady: Gloria, Gloria Plantsadora" revolved around the President running in 2004. It also took potshots at her Cabinet officials and other supposed presidential candidates and Estrada.

At one point, when the "President" sought advice from her father, the late President Diosdado Macapagal, he mistook her for her half-sister Cielo Macapagal-Salgado.

Some who watched the show said the NPC was "too kind" to the President.

They also did not find the lampoon to be funny.

And apparently, it was extremely dull to some. A television network yesterday showed a video of a Malacañang reporter sleeping while the show was going on.

The President herself did not show any reaction most of the time.

She, however, laughed when "Social Welfare Secretary Dinky Soliman" came out in a sexy Rosanna Roces outfit.

She also chuckled when "Korina Sanchez," during the debate among the presidential candidates, threatened to maul her maid.

In her speech Ms Macapagal said she knew how to take jokes at her expense.

"Really, I do. If you don't believe me, *tatarayan ko kayo* (I'll snap at you)," she said.

"Actually, *hindi ako napipikon* (I don't get peeved). *Mataray lang ako talaga* (I'm really just testy). I am very even-tempered, always *mataray*. But I have not internalized my *katarayan*. It's just a reflex action. It's not a deliberate expression of my true message," she added.

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Southern Luzon Bureau
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Legazpi City
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Fax No. (052) 820-1274
E-mail: inq_bicol@inquirer.com.ph

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TUCP head faces raps for fund fraud

By Rocky Nazareno

THE SENATE committee on government corporations and public enterprises will refer to a prosecutor's office the filing of estafa charges against labor leader Democrito Mendoza and several others for the alleged diversion of P750 million of public funds to corporations owned by Mendoza.

The committee held a hearing Tuesday to listen to the testimony of Pedro T. Arias, former Associated Labor Union head.

Arias accused Mendoza, his sons, Benjamin Akol, Herminio Vida and Romas Riveral of diverting income from Oriental Port and Allied Services Corp. (Opascor), a cargo-handling firm owned by the port workers in Cebu, to other companies that they owned.

Arias also testified that Mendoza and the others violated the Securities Code by selling nonexistent shares of stock in Opascor and telling members of the ALU that they were shareholders although what they had were only fake shares.

Arias also accused the Mendozas of defrauding the Cebu Ports Authority (CPA) of its share in the revenue of Opascor by not declaring the real amount of collections that the corporation gets.

He said Opascor did not pay the correct income tax based on income derived from its operations.

Sen. John Osmeña, committee chair, said his committee would summon Tomas Riveral, CPA commissioner and Opascor vice president, and Lesar Ortega, Opascor vice president for corporate planning, to appear in the committee's next hearing on May 6.

"The estafa case will be referred by the committee to the prosecutor since it is criminal in nature," said Osmeña, a known detractor of Mendoza.

In Cebu City, the family of Mendoza, ALU-Trade Union Congress of the Philippines national president, yesterday welcomed the decision of the Senate committee on government corporations to file estafa charges against him and his son.

Michael Mendoza, Democrito's son and ALU-TUCP vice president, said they wanted to answer the charges in court, not before a Senate inquiry, which he described as partial against his family.

He said he believed that Osmeña was behind the decision of the committee to refer to the prosecutor's office the estafa charges against his father and his brother, Democrito Jr.

Osmeña, Michael claimed, wanted to prosecute and harass his family because the ALU-TUCP never supported the senator's political career.

"We will not be cowed. We are not afraid of Osmeña," Michael said in Cebuano.

The Senate committee on government corporation is conducting an inquiry into the alleged anomalies in the Opascor. Democrito Mendoza, Opascor chair, owns shares in the corporation.

Democrito and his two sons, Dennis and Democrito Jr., were invited to attend the next committee hearing on May 26.

But Michael said they had no plans of attending the hearing because activities like these could just be turned into a political circus and they cannot expect fairness.

"*Binuang na'ng* Senate inquiry, *mapriso na kon mapriso, mahimong i-contempt nila pero di gyud mi moadto.* (The Senate inquiry is full of hogwash. We don't care if we go to jail. (The senators) can cite us in contempt but we will still not attend the hearing," he said.

But Michael warned that they might opt to stage a nationwide strike instead of attending the Senate investigation. ***Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau***

Mayor stops operations of garbage handler

PLARIDEL, Bulacan—The municipal government has stopped the operations of a waste treatment firm hauling toxic and hazardous wastes from more than 200 companies in Metro Manila and Southern and Central Luzon.

Mayor Jaime Vistan said the local government issued a cease-and-desist order against Enviro-Means Industries Inc. (EMII) in Barangay Sipat here because the firm had no business and mayor's permits.

Vistan said the permit to develop EMII's nine-hectare property was still awaiting approval from the municipal government.

Reports said the firm's operations stopped after officials and workers of EMII left the firm's compound when Vistan issued the CDO on April 18. Guards are securing the EMII compound here.

Residents have petitioned the local government to close EMII because of its threat to public health.

But Vistan said he could not issue a CDO based on the firm's alleged threat to public health as inspections made by local environmental officials found no industrial or hazardous wastes being dumped in the property of EMII.

Vistan said chemicals and wastes brought to the EMII compound were "treated wastes."

"They treat these in Marilao so they are not anymore toxic when brought to our town," he said.

He said he issued the CDO based on a "technicality." The company has been operating only with an environmental clearance certificate issued by the regional Environmental Management Bureau.

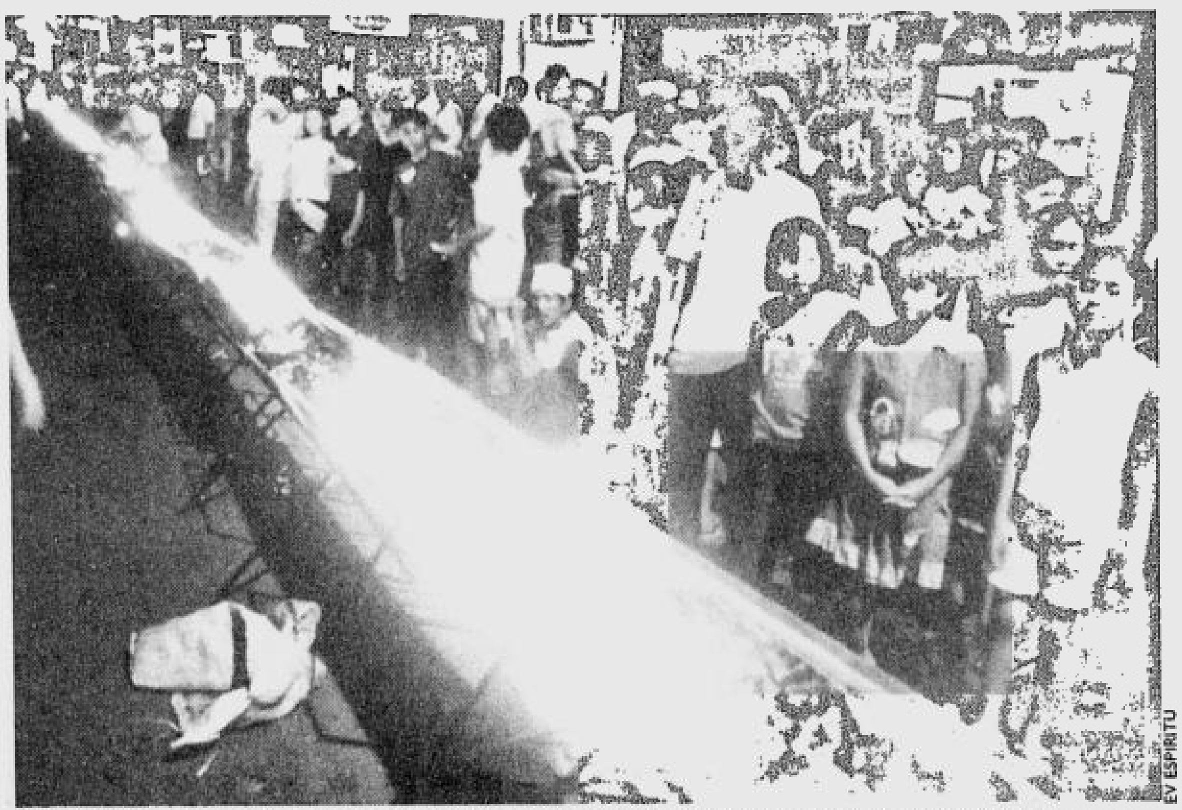
The Catholic Diocese of Malolos' Diocesan Ecological and Environmental Program and the Justice and Peace Desk have been supporting the residents' fight against the operations of EMII.

The diocese has gathered more than 10,000 signatures from residents of Sipat and nearby barangays and from Pulilan town expressing opposition to the firm's operations.

Vistan said he was studying the filing of charges against EMII for operating without the necessary permits. ***Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk***

Dagupan fails in bid for world record for longest barbecue

By Yolanda Fuertes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau



DAGUPAN'S "bangus" grill was long but not long enough for the Guinness Book of World Records.

DAGUPAN CITY--The city failed to put up on Tuesday night 1,001 meters of grill to bid for the Guinness World Record for the longest barbecue, but some 75,000 Dagupeños and visitors turned out for the "Kalutan ed Dagupan (Grilling in Dagupan)," making the affair the grandest party the city ever had.

"It was grand, too grand for us to handle," said Mayor Benjamin Lim, adding that he did not expect the number of people who trooped to AB Fernandez Street where the barbecue party was held.

The barbecue party was part of Pangasinan's celebration of Pista'y Dayat (sea festival) 2002.

"But we will still submit whatever documentation we were able to make to the Guinness records research services office in London. It is up to the body to consider our entry," Lim said.

He added: "If we do not make it, we will do better next time."

Lim said the city government and the festival organizers have learned "enough lessons from the event and we will do better next year."

The city was trying to break the record for the longest barbecue held by La Municipalidad Provincial de Canchis of Peru. It measured 613 meters long and was made up of 536 grills, each grill measuring 1 m x 72 cm built in Sicuani, Peru, on Nov. 13, 1999.

Dagupan lined up 800 of the 1,001 grills prepared for the occasion. Each grill measured 1.2 meters, but not all of the grills had *bangus* (milkfish) to cook.

Lim said the party was marred by "lack of time management" and "confusion" that started in the afternoon when the Gilon! Gilon! (*bangus* harvest dance festival) was held on AB Fernandez, the same street where the barbecue party was to be held.

The dance festival was held from 2 to 4 p.m., giving little time for organizers to put up the tents and line up the grills.

After the festival, people crowded the street, and organizers had a hard time setting up the grills and fire before the 6 p.m. start.

But the charcoal, a main requirement for grilling, came after the 6 p.m. lighting ceremony led by Speaker Jose de Venecia, Local Government Undersecretary Alipio Fernandez and Lim.

When the charcoal was finally distributed, it was already 7 p.m. While there were enough *bangus* that night, many grills were left with nothing to grill because "those in charge cannot bring the fish to the designated places because of the heavy human traffic," organizers said.

"It was not even possible to properly document the party because the crowd prevented cameramen from moving around to take pictures," Lim said.

Lim thought the street, named after Angel Fernandez, Dagupan's first elected mayor in 1947, was big enough to host the grill party.

Most people, who expected to buy grilled *bangus*, went home disappointed because there were no *bangus* to buy.

But he said he was happy because "at least we boosted the morale of the Dagupeños who feel proud of being *bangus* producers and who must have realized that they have to take care of the river systems which is their source of livelihood."

For the barbecue party, each barangay was given 10 grills and 100 pieces of *bangus* from Lim's office. Some of the grilled *bangus* were given free to visitors. ***With reports from Lezlee Santillan and Jennifer Santos, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

Pangasinan farmers turn to veggies to fight drought

LINGAYEN, Pangasinan—Instead of sulking because the drought hindered them from planting rice, most farmers in the province have turned to planting high-value crops such as tobacco, corn, onions and vegetables.

Jose Almendares, provincial agriculturist, said 4,000 hectares of farmland in the province were planted with high-value crops that, unlike rice, do not need too much water.

"Farmers can actually earn more from high-value crops compared to rice, but planting these is labor intensive," Almendares said.

He said that for every hectare, a farmer can earn P60,000 to P80,000 from planting tobacco and onion; P30,000 from eggplant; and P20,000 from corn.

He said farmers earn only P6,000 from planting rice during the wet season harvest and P10,000 during the dry season harvest.

But Almendares said rice would remain to be the dominant crop in the province because, aside from being the staple food of Filipinos, the farmers are used to planting it.

"It is easiest to grow and does not need much work. Besides, farmers cannot grow the high-value crops during the wet season," he said.

Gov. Victor Agbayani has allocated P25 million for the rehabilitation of irrigation facilities in a bid to lessen the effects of the drought on agriculture in the province.

The province has completed the rehabilitation of nine communal irrigation facilities and is scheduled to complete another 21 facilities this year. The projects will irrigate 3,103 hectares of land.

However, water lack is the real threat to agriculture, said Almendares.

The Binga dam in Benguet, which is the primary source of irrigation in the province, releases only six cubic meters of water every second, instead of the usual 16 cubic meters.

"Because of this, most irrigated farms planted during the second cropping were not reached by irrigation water, resulting in the destruction of 1,000 hectares of palay farms," Almendares said.

But he gave assurance that the province's food security is not threatened because Pangasinan produces an average of 20 million cavans of rice yearly. ***Yolanda Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

GMA sorties aimed at polls

By Aquiles Zonio
PDI Mindanao Bureau

DAVAO CITY—The provincial sorties of President Macapagal-Arroyo have been viewed as a "mega show" to make herself more visible in preparation for her presidential bid in 2004.

Marvic Leonen, University of the Philippines law professor and political analyst, said the President might have realized that it was more important to start reaching out and make herself more visible outside Metro Manila to prove to her detractors that the threat to her presidency is not real.

"If you are a president, you need a mega show... that it is stable, that you can leave Manila once in a while," he said.

Leonen added that it was an advantage to the President, who has been reported to be seeking a victory in the 2004 presidential election, that she can be elected. "So she has to campaign early."

Soldier slain, civilian hurt in NPA ambush in E. Samar

TACLOBAN CITY—A soldier was killed and a civilian was wounded in an ambush staged on Saturday by at least 10 heavily armed men suspected to be members of the New People's Army in a remote village in Can-avid town, Eastern Samar.

The fatality was identified as Staff Sgt. Orlando Vinculado of the 14th Infantry Battalion based in Dolores, Eastern Samar, according to a report reaching the Police Regional Office based in Palo, Leyte.

The report said Vinculado died on the spot after he was shot in the head by one of the alleged rebels during the ambush in Barangay Can-iray, some 10 kilometers from the town proper.

The civilian was only identified in the police report as a certain Lando. He was hit in the right leg.

Vinculado and Lando were about to board a motorboat for Barangay Mabuhay, also in Can-avid, when the assailants suddenly appeared and fired at them, the report said. ***Cynthia A. Borgueta, PDI Visayas Bureau***

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms while the rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms mostly over the Eastern section. source: **pagasa**

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Hi35° Lo 23°
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Hi 26° Lo 15°
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Hi 36° Lo 22°
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Hi 34° Lo 24°
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Hi 35° Lo 23°
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Hi 33° Lo 22°
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 25°
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 24°
Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy	Hi 34° Lo 25°
Roxas	Partly Cloudy	Hi 33° Lo 26°
Cebu	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 26°
Tacloban	Partly Cloudy	Hi 34° Lo 25°
Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 33° Lo 25°
Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 33° Lo 25°
Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 33° Lo 23°
Davao	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 34° Lo 25°

Compiled by: Armin P. Adina, PDI Research/05/01/02

Cops pin hope on diary in solving murder of judge

DAVAO CITY—Judge Eugenio Valles' diary could help authorities unmask his assassins and, possibly, the masterminds and their motive for killing him on Thursday.

Supt. Jaime Morente, Compostela Valley police director and head of the newly created Task Force Valles, said last week that Valles' diary is now in their custody.

He said there might be "substantial" entries in the diary about threats received by the judge and "maybe (entries on) the identities of those who issued these threats."

Earlier, former Davao Oriental Vice Gov. Cirilo Valles, the victim's elder brother, said the judge had been receiving death threats.

"He received threats several times through his cellphone. One of the messages said: '*Ilang araw ka na lang*' or '*Bilang na lang ang araw mo.*'"

"He knew that he was going to be killed soon and we think that it was really the group of small-scale miners in Mt. Diwalwal who did it. They were angered by his decision. Nobody else would do that to him but the small-scale miners," Cirilo told the INQUIRER.

Valles handled the controversial case filed by small-scale miners on Diwalwal against Monkayo Mayor Joel Brillantes a few months ago.

Early this year, Brillantes ordered the closure of small mines in the gold rush area, blaming these for the pollution of the Naboc River, from which farmers in the town and in Compostela Valley draw water for their irrigation needs.

Valles had sustained Brillantes' closure order.

Cirilo said his brother felt he would be killed soon when he asked his live-in partner this question: "*Day og mamatay ko karon, dawaton kaha ko sa Ginoo* (Honey, if I die today, will God accept me)?"

Valles, who was separated from his wife, was shot at close range by one of two motorcycle-riding men while jogging in Purok 7, Barangay Santa Maria in Nabunturan, Compostela Valley, at around 5:15 on Thursday morning.

He died from five bullet wounds in the head, inflicted at close range.

Police authorities have expressed belief that his assailants could be hired killers or members of the Sparrow Unit of the New People's Army.

"(He) knew very well that he was going to be killed because of the Mt. Diwalwal case that he was handling," Cirilo said.

Chief Supt. Eduardo Matillano, Southern Mindanao police director, earlier said the threats to Judge Valles came after he rejected the motion for a temporary restraining order filed by small-scale miners against Brillantes.

Mt. Diwata barangay captain Franco Tito, a leader of the small-scale miners, was put on the suspects' list. But the official has denied his possible involvement in the killing. ***Anthony S. Allada and Ferdinand O. Zuasola, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Bombing worsens conflict

COTABATO CITY—The regional director of the National Telecommunications Office (NTO) here and his deputy yesterday traded barbs and accused each other of plotting the bomb attack on their office here.

NTO regional chief Mitoon Ibra denied the allegations of his assistant, Amir Bantuas, that he ordered the bomb attack on the office at dawn of Tuesday.

No one was hurt in the blast, which destroyed portions of the administration building and the supply building on Datu Liwa Candao Street.

THE headline, "Gov't telecom office in GenSan bombed," which appeared in yesterday's front page story should have read "Gov't telecom in Cotabato City bombed." We regret the error.

Bantuas said Ibra and 10 other NTO officials were trying to "silence" him.

He said he filed criminal and corruption charges against the NTO officials before the Ombudsman.

Both Bantuas and Ibra are from Marawi City.

"I have been receiving death threats. They want to finish me off because I go against the tide of corruption at Telof (Telecommunications office)-12 regional office," Bantuas said.

Spare the office

He appealed to his enemies who may be plotting to kill him not to destroy the office and not to hamper the services that the NTO is providing its clients.

"Spare our office, spare our clients. If you really want to get me, I won't back off... Let's see each other in our hometown, not here," Bantuas dared Ibra over radio station dxMS.

But Ibra said he was surprised that Bantuas was quick to raise an accusing finger against him although an investigation of the bombing has yet to be conducted.

He accused Bantuas of being a troublemaker.

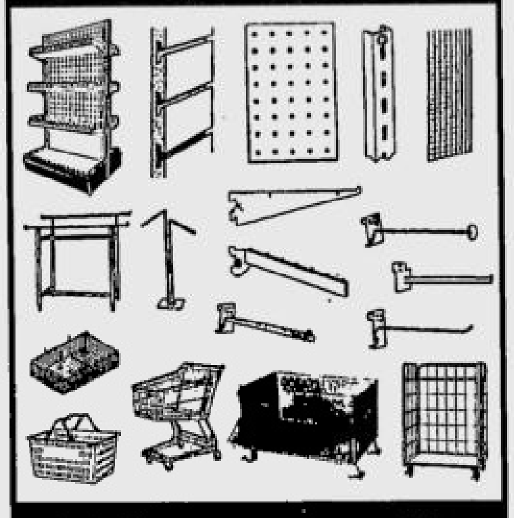
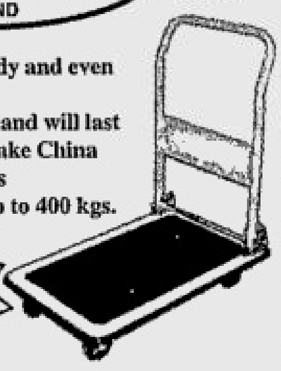
"He has many Army and police escorts because many (people) are angry at him," Ibra said in a telephone interview from Manila.

Graft

Bantuas has filed criminal and corruption charges against Ibra and other employees for illegal purchases of office supplies and for the release of funds for nonexistent projects.

Employees of the NTO, which also known here as Telof, told the INQUIRER that they now fear for their safety in the wake of the feud between the two top officials.

"We have declared our own holiday. We will only report to office if our safety is assured by authorities," said an employee, who asked not to be named. ***Edwin O. Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

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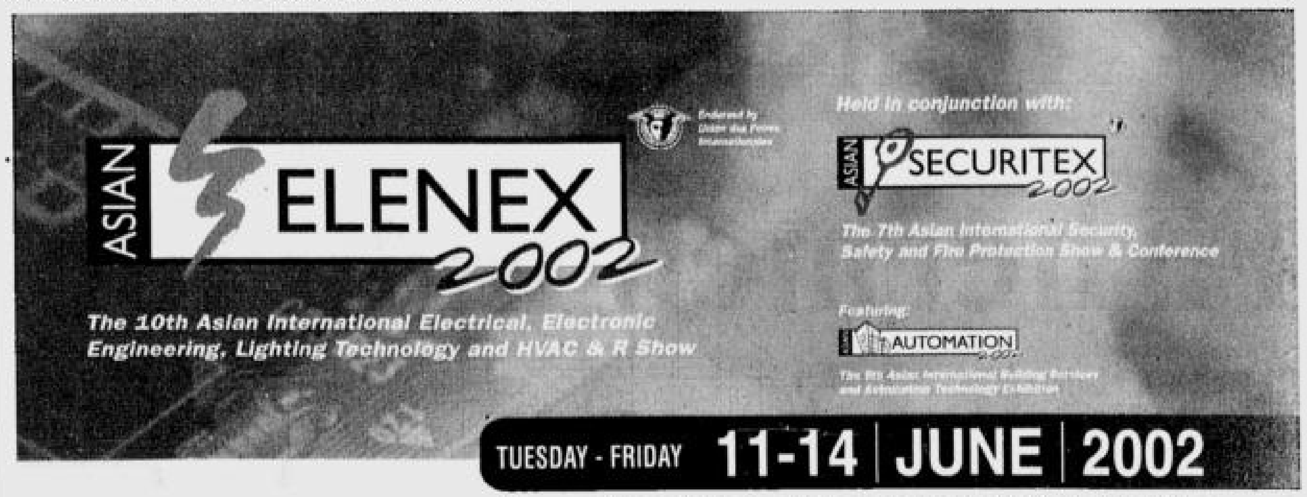
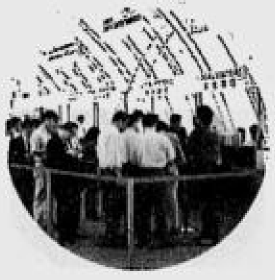

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PHILIPPINE COLLEGE OF SURGEONS

28th Midyear Convention

Hosted by: PCS Negros Occidental Chapter

Bacolod Convention Plaza, Bacolod City
May 3-4, 2002

Messages

I extend my warmest felicitations to the Philippine College of Surgeons on its 28th *Midyear Convention*.

I commend you for your commitment to improve the medical profession in the country. Your organization's meritorious efforts have helped the country's medical practitioners keep abreast of current trends in the profession, be competitive and become better health service providers.

Our bid to eradicate poverty and uplift the lives of our people requires that we improve the quality and expand the coverage of our health services. I count on your support to make medical services more accessible to all, especially the disadvantaged sectors of our society. I am confident this convention will inspire and strengthen your resolve to render better services to the Filipino people.

Our strategic partnership provides impetus and dynamism to our common pursuit of responsive healthcare for all Filipinos. Let us continue our work in healing and rebuilding our nation towards greater peace, progress and prosperity.

May you have a fruitful convention. *MABUHAY!*

GMArroyo
GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President
Republic of the Philippines

My warmest felicitations to the officers and members of the Philippine College of Surgeons as they hold their 28th Midyear Convention on May 3-4, 2002.

The changing trends in the management of today's diseases brings to fore the imperative to keep our surgeons abreast of the technological and clinical advances in the field of surgery. Another challenge lies in the proper application of new knowledge learned in relation to the various situations that your members may find themselves in.

This Midyear Convention therefore comes timely and relevant as new ways of dealing with illness continue to be discovered and new surgical techniques are being developed to continually improve the delivery of surgical services in the country and elsewhere.

As you hold this convention, I would like to enjoin the esteemed members of your organization to support the Department of Health's efforts in improving our people's access to quality healthcare, with the end goal of eventually improving the quality of life of many of our Filipino brothers and sisters, especially the poor and the underserved.

Together, let us contribute to the task of [illegible]-building by participating actively in the development and implementation of national and local health programs aimed at achieving a nation of healthier and more progressive Filipinos.

Congratulations and *Mabuhay kayong lahat!*

MANUEL M. DAYRIT, M.D., MSc.
Secretary of Health

The city of Bacolod warmly welcomes all of the delegates to the 28th Midyear Convention of the Philippine College of Surgeons on May 3-4, 2002.

The Philippine College of Surgeons are worthy of emulation for their contribution to our community and the theme "Issues and Controversies in Surgery" is a fitting and timely challenge to all of its members in the furtherance of their profession.

We wish you all the best in your activity and may you continue to be an integral part of our community.

LUZVIMINDA S. VALDEZ
City Mayor

With genuine feelings of fellowship, and on behalf of the Officers and Board of Governors of the Philippine Medical Association, we express heartfelt greetings to the officers and members of the Philippine College of Surgeons on the occasion of its 28th Midyear Convention.

As I treasure and take pride in my kinship with you and with the PCS, I find great gratification in greeting you on this propitious and important occasion. You really do us proud in going the distance of providing the membership and other cutting specialists with opportunities to resolve nagging issues and controversies. We applaud your admirable concern in catering to the intellectual needs of surgeons of the country through the dissemination and discussion of cutting edge topics that can only redound to better health of the nation. We look forward to the unqualified success of this convention.

Thank you PCS, for taking our cue to be at the vanguard in addressing health threats, and for helping us to realize the PMA theme, "Doctors at the Forefront - A Challenge for Change".

Congratulations, Mabuhay ang Philippine College of Surgeons.

GIL C. FERNANDEZ, M.D., FPCS
President

We gladly welcome all the Fellows, Residents, Guests and their Families to the 28th Midyear Convention of the Philippine College of Surgeons in the City of Smiles – BACOLOD CITY!

Our theme for this 1½-day convention on May 3 and 4, 2002 is "Issues and Controversies in Surgery." The Committee on Conventions, together with the Host Chapter, has prepared balanced, interesting scientific sessions, where we hope to address the concerns of the surgeon regarding controversial topics. There will also be discussions concerning the medico-legal aspect of a surgeon's practice. The participants can expect to take part in the sports activities and fellowship with other surgeons, who have traveled far to be able to join this event. We hope to make this a venue for renewing acquaintances and making new friends, not only among our surgeons, but their families as well.

We are thankful to the Committee on Conventions, the PCS Negros Occidental Chapter, the PCS Secretariat, our Friends in the Pharmaceutical Industry and all those who have graced this occasion. Your help and presence truly made this year's Midyear convention a successful one.

ERNESTO C. TAN, M.D., F.P.C.S.
President

Mabuhay!

Bacolod, a fun-loving city famous for it's "Maskara Festival", welcomes all of us as we gather for the 28th PCS Midyear Convention from May 3-4, 2002. Our host, the PCS Negros Occidental chapter, and the convention committee left no stones unturned to make our stay in Bacolod City both pleasant and fruitful.

To allow all of us to enjoy the many sights, sounds, and food of Bacolod and Negros, this year's convention has been reduced to one and a half days of extensive scientific exchanges. However, to make up for the apparent reduction in the scientific meetings, two simultaneous sessions of the popular Kapihan sa PCS will be held on the first day even before the convention is officially opened. Issues and controversies in our surgical practices will be discussed and debated by experts. Active participation from all of us would make our meetings truly worthwhile.

Sport activities such as golf and basketball have been scheduled a day before. We also prepared a social program for the enjoyment of our family members and friends.

As we enjoy the City of Bacolod, let us also enjoy the company of new and old friends.

FERNANDO L. LOPEZ, M.D., FPCS
Vice President & Over-all Chairman
Committee on Conventions

"Malipayon nga Pagkari!"

A warm welcome to all of the delegates to this 28th Mid-Year Convention of the Philippine College of Surgeons in Bacolod City. We once more hold this annual affair to pursue our continuing education in the different fields of surgical practice and to foster fellowship and goodwill among our fellows and comrades.

In this Year of the Horse, Bacolod, the "City of Smiles", cordially greets each and everyone in attendance. May your stay be pleasant, and we hope that the scientific and social programs we have prepared will be to the satisfaction of all.

MABUHAY!

RAFAEL L. JOCSON, M.D., FPCS
President
PCS - Negros Occidental Chapter

In behalf of the Negros Occidental Chapter, I would like to welcome all the delegates to the 28th Midyear Convention of the Philippine College of Surgeons of Bacolod City - the City of Smiles! This is the third time the chapter is hosting the Midyear Convention. The first time was in 1975 during the 1st PCS Midyear Convention, and the second was in 1993 during the 19th PCS Midyear Convention. Incidentally, it was also during the 19th PCS Midyear Convention held in this city when the 1st out-of-Manila Part II (oral) certifying board examinations of the Philippine Board of Surgery was held simultaneously, making the city most memorable especially to those who passed. Also simultaneously held was the 1st out-of-Manila PSPS Postgraduate Course, occupying Day I of the Midyear Convention, and sponsored by the Philippine Society of Pediatric Surgeons. We shall always be proud to host the Midyear Convention of the College whenever our turn comes - our way of serving the College and all the Fellows. We can only hope that our city will always have something new, something interesting, and something memorable to offer everytime any of you visit our place - exactly what the local chapter hopes to give you on this our 28th Midyear convention. Again, Welcome!

REGINALD V. HAO, M.D., FPCS
Immediate Past Pres., PCS Negros Occidental Chap.
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PROGRAMME

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- Invocation
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  PCS-Negros Occidental Chapter
- Opening of the Convention
  ERNESTO C. TAN, MD, FPCS
  President
  Philippine College of Surgeons
- Welcome Remarks
  RAFAEL L. JOCSON, MD, FPCS
  President
  PCS-Negros Occidental Chapter
- Presentation of Convention Delegates
  FERNANDO L. LOPEZ, MD, FPCS
  Vice President & Overall Chairman
  Committee on Conventions
- Introduction of Guest Speaker
  HUMBERTO A. JAVELLANA, MD, FPCS
  Vice President
  PCS-Negros Occidental Chapter
- Address
  The Honorable LUZVIMINDA S. VALDEZ
  Mayor, Bacolod City
- EDUARDO R. GATCHALIAN, MD, FPCS
  Secretary, Philippine College of Surgeons
  Master of Ceremonies
- OPENING OF EXHIBITS
  The Honorable LUZVIMINDA S. VALDEZ
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Fishermen fight for 2 Batangas bays

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
Calatagan, Batangas

AT LEAST 40 outrigger boats, filled with representatives of nongovernment groups and several journalists, braved the rolling waves of the South China Sea on Sunday as they crisscrossed the Balayan and Pagapas bays in Batangas toward three onshore construction projects reportedly owned by three influential businessmen.

The people were brought by fishermen belonging to the Samahan ng mga Maliliit na Mangingisda sa Calatagan (Sammaca) who are protesting the seeming inaction of government authorities on what they describe as environmentally destructive activities along the coasts of the bays off Calatagan.

A resort town, Calatagan is some 120 kilometers south of Manila.

The coastal activities have been "slowly killing them," the fishermen said. They charged as illegal the dredging and reclamation work near the Punta Baluarte, the town's premier ritzy haven.

In the newly reclaimed foreshore of the controversial project, the fishermen planted at least 30 white bamboo crosses, symbolizing their doom if the government would continue to ignore their grievances.

They identified one of the project proponents as Raymond Moreno, reportedly the owner and president of the communication firm Liberty Broadcasting Network Inc.

A couple of kilometers along the coast, the boat-riding demonstrators passed by another group of protesting fishermen standing on a 200-meter stretch of concrete seawall made from dead corals. The wall serves as a barrier to protect a 50-hectare fishpond owned by one Lorenzo Vergara.

The inland protesters held a casket made of cardboard with the mask of death on one side and several placards denouncing the wanton destruction of matured mangroves in the area, allegedly to give way for the fishpond project, on another side.

Construction

Facing Balayan Bay, the demonstrators sailed around what used to be a 12-hectare mangrove islet, a portion of which is being prepared for an up-scale resort reportedly owned by a certain Camilo Ortiz.

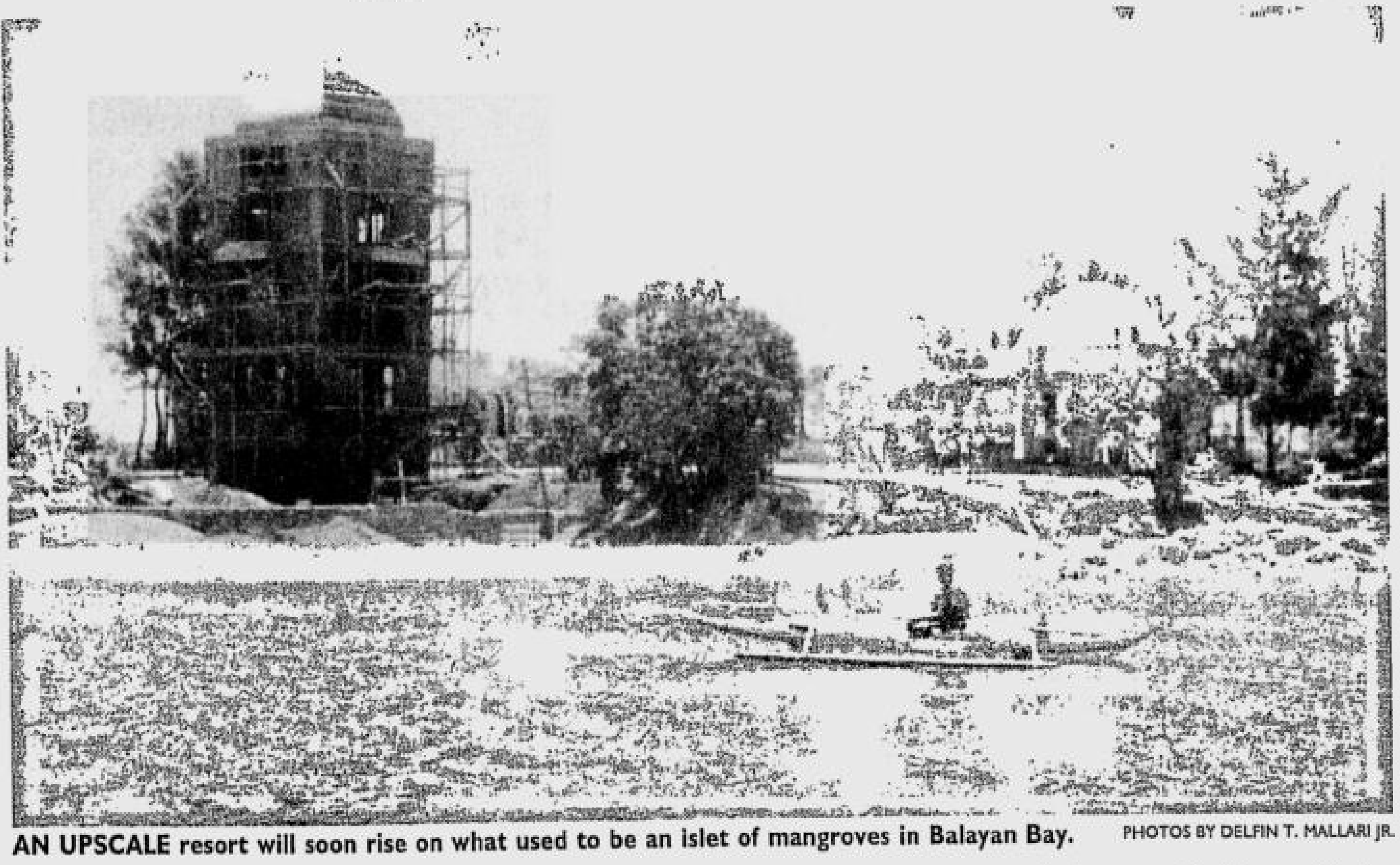
Two dome-topped towers are being erected to serve as vantage attractions from the sea.

A concrete seawall, also made from dead corals, encloses the construction site.

The remaining mangrove area is at the farthest left portion of the islet.

"These environmentally destructive projects should be classified as heinous crimes," Ruperto Alerosa, Sammaca president, told the journalists.

"What those rich people are constructing are like burial grounds and we, the small fishermen (who) live and depend on the resources of the bays, are the ones to be buried. They are slowly killing us."


AN UPSCALE resort will soon rise on what used to be an islet of mangroves in Balayan Bay. PHOTOS BY DELFIN T. MALLARI JR.

PROTESTING fishermen plant crosses to symbolize an end to their source of livelihood.

Sammaca members pointed out that Moreno's construction site has been declared a tourist zone and marine reserve area, and their primary source of livelihood.

The bay, with an area of about 30 sq. km, is home to a variety of corals, mangroves, fish and endangered species, like the now-elusive sea turtles, they said.

A local ordinance passed in 1992 declared the Pagapas Bay and Calatagan's municipal waters a "marine reservation and in a state of rehabilitation."

The Sammaca said Moreno's dredging activities destroy seagrass beds that provide shelter and food for fish.

"We were alarmed when it became noticeable that there were unnatural dredging and reclamation activities which were directed farther and farther away from the shore. We soon found that Mr. Moreno intends to build a mini pier for his fleet of vessels," Alesora said.

Denial

Moreno, however, refuted Alesora's statements. He said he has not allowed any mangrove tree to be cut down or corals to be destroyed in the area.

"I would be the last one to do that," he told the INQUIRER. He said he was preparing the area to be his retirement abode.

He clarified that he was dredging the land of silt brought about by the excavation and road works being undertaken by Punta Baluarte.

Explaining that his place is located in a lower portion of the area where much of the silt from the Punta Baluarte construction project has flowed, Moreno said he had to use a backhoe to dredge out all the silt.

He said the fishermen were just being used by a landowner to drive him away from the area.

It was learned that the businessman applied for a foreshore lease on the area, covering about 20 hectares.

The Sammaca alleged that Moreno's activities were being carried out without any permit from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Without the needed DENR documents, the project proponent started construction work in late 2000. For the violation, the DENR ordered Moreno to stop the project and imposed a P50,000 fine.

But Moreno was able to secure a preliminary injunction from a regional trial court in Batangas City.

DENR regional executive director Samuel Peñafiel said Moreno's case has been elevated to the Office of the Solicitor General (OSG).

"The DENR is now being represented by the OSG because Mr. Moreno wants the charges against him quashed," he said.

Lawyer Ed Relucio of Tanggol Kalikasan, an environmental legal defense center that has been assisting the fishermen, said his group was working closely with the OSG lawyers on Moreno's case to help them better appreciate the facts in the context of environmental laws.

Warning

A study conducted by Selina Stoute, an Australian marine biologist and volunteer for the Center for Empowerment and Resource Development, warned of the potentially destructive effects of dredging activities on the fragile environment.

Among the problems cited by Stoute are the possible loss of productivity and the death of marine organisms.

"The reclamation activities could restrict the flow of water from a natural waterway, which could affect the natural chain of marine ecosystem," the study said.

"Anyone can transform this place into one vast useless body of water by just tampering with the normal growth of the marine ecosystem. After doing so, they can also start counting the remaining days of our life as a fisherfolk community," lamented Berto Racela, chair of the Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Council in the area.

A fisherman, Budo Piel, said that when he and his family settled on the islet more than 20 years ago, "we were only two pioneering families here."

"But the number of settlers ballooned to at least 45 families because of the rich fishing ground provided by the mangroves," he added.

When Ortiz appeared three years ago on the basis of an alleged selling agreement with the Gal family, who claimed ownership of the 12.3-hectare island, "some of the settlers started to leave the place."

That was when most of them "experienced harassment from the supposed island seller. They were given P15,000 each just to leave the place," Piel said.

"But how can they claim ownership of the land when during the time that our local officials allowed us to settle, none of them presented to us the real owner. (It was) only lately (when they did that) when Ortiz came into the picture," he said.

He said he cried when the vast mangroves were cut down to clear the way for the construction activities. "I was the one who planted and nurtured those mangroves because they gave us life in return."

Deaf ear

The fisherfolk claimed that the local government officials have turned a deaf ear to their case.

"Our slippers are already worn-out going back and forth to the town hall. Our mayor has (ignored) us," said Emmy Hernandez, Samahang Anak Dagat president.

When this writer called up Calatagan Mayor Oliver Palacio, a male member of his answered. After learning the purpose of the query, he said Palacio would return the call. This writer made two more calls to follow up, but these were unanswered.

Municipal engineer Miguel Duman admitted that all the construction activities questioned by the Sammaca did not have permits from his office.

But he pointed out that the problem lies with the DENR, "because the projects don't have environmental clearance certificates or environmental impact assessments."

"Guevara's fishpond, which has been in place for the past 10 years, was never even visited once by any government agency," a Sammaca official claimed. He blamed local government officials for the "intentional lapses."

It was also learned that an influential political family in the province was behind Ortiz's project.

Blind aide impresses Mayor Vi

By Mei Magsino
Lipa City

DESPITE his being born blind, Ronel del Rio, 34, sees the need to help the blind and the sighted. As executive assistant for housing and livelihood development of actor and Mayor Vilma Santos-Recto, Del Rio and other board members of the Lipa City Local Housing Board are working hard to meet their target of awarding residential lots to 4,000 families in the city.

"As of now, we have identified 10 hectares of land for the low-cost housing. On Nov. 3, in time for Mayor Vi's birthday, we will be able to distribute the land titles," Del Rio said, oozing with optimism and confidence.

Santos-Recto, who hired Del Rio, said she has been impressed by the blind man's capability.

"He's doing his job very well and he's not asking for anything in return. Here in Lipa, we need people who work with compassion. He's also very good at bringing people together through his charisma. We need people with passion in their work," the mayor said.

Del Rio is now on his last semester at the De La Salle University in Lipa, taking up a Masters in Management Technology course under a scholarship grant of Sen. Ralph Recto.

Scholarships

Del Rio was born blind, but this did not stop him from proving to his peers that he can do what a person with normal sight can do—and, sometimes, better.

His mother died when he was only 2 years old. Although Del Rio had scholarship grants, his father helped him any way he could.

Del Rio was able to finish his elementary and high school education at the Philippine National School for the Blind in Pasay City.

As a scholar of the Rotary Club of Manila, he studied at the Philippine Christian University. He graduated with a degree of Bachelor of Science majoring in Social Work in 1991, with the help of several student assistants.

Also an expert masseur, he joined the Foundation for the Blind on Vito Cruz Street, Manila, after college as an assistant social worker. He urged his fellow workers to form a cooperative for masseurs in 1996.

It was also in the foundation where he met Araceli Jumilla, a social worker from Bacolod City. Three years later, they got married and now have three children.

"But take note, I did not massage her," Del Rio joked. "You know what she did? She proved that I could be a father, a good father."

Clients

One of his most notable clients as a masseur, he said, was then Ombudsman Raul Gonzalez.

Actors who were among his regular clients included Eddie Gutierrez and the late Dindo Fernando.

After a one-year computer training in the United States, Del Rio came back to his hometown of Lipa and became the official masseur of businessmen, politicians and other VIPs.

He became one of the city's top broadcasters in 1996, with his own radio program, "Good Morning Southern Tagalog," at GV 99.9 FM.

But still, he kept his massage business.

"It was here where I was introduced to Col. Ricardo Macala," Del Rio said, "when he ran for mayor in 1998, he convinced me to run for councilor. But I lost the race. You see, I was cut out for social work."

After the election, he went back to broadcasting and massage.

In 1994, Del Rio joined the Punla Ka Foundation, which Senator Recto helped establish in 1992. He became one of the volunteers and caught the attention of Mayor Santos-Recto.

With Ate Vi

"It was in 2001 when Mayor Vi asked me if I wanted to be part of her team. It was a surprise for me because during the 1998 elections, we were with opposing political parties. Mayor Vi was with Lakas, while I was with Reporma when I ran for councilor," Del Rio said.

He strived hard to prove that the mayor was right in choosing him.

When he started, Del Rio worked for the consolidation of the livelihood components of the city government. This was to prevent duplication of assistance from the Department of Social Welfare and Development and other departments, and speed up the delivery of services to the people.

He led the creation of the Lipa City Livelihood Fund. This way, livelihood projects will not be affected by the internal revenue allotment of the local government unit.

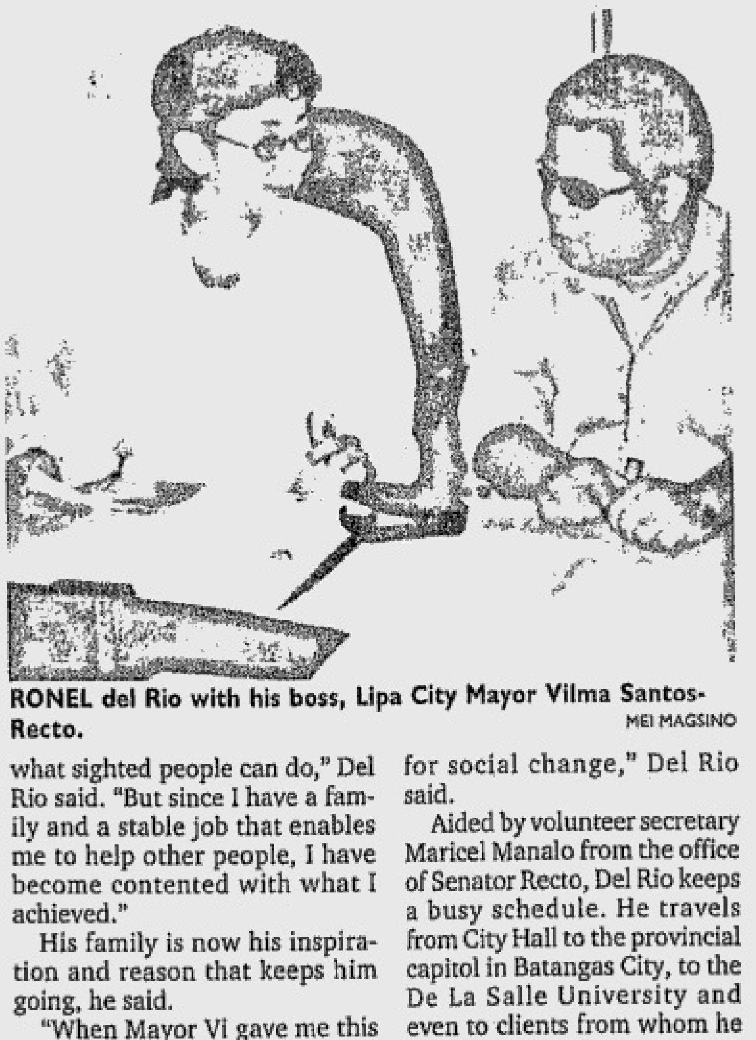
"Before, I was so overtaken by the desire to prove that I can do what sighted people can do," Del Rio said. "But since I have a family and a stable job that enables me to help other people, I have become contented with what I achieved."

His family is now his inspiration and reason that keeps him going, he said.

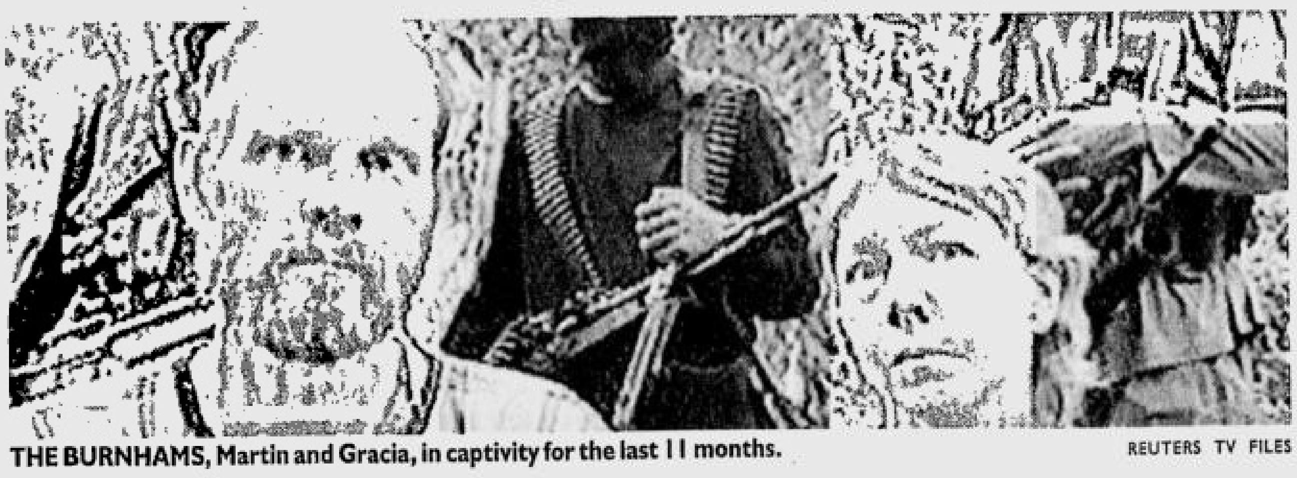
"When Mayor Vi gave me this position, she just proved to the world that a person with disability can be trusted, that a blind man can be responsible and can do the work as well as any sighted person can. I wanted to prove that Mayor Vi was right to trust me. And more than that, I wanted to prove that I can be a catalyst for social change," Del Rio said.

Aided by volunteer secretary Maricel Manalo from the office of Senator Recto, Del Rio keeps a busy schedule. He travels from City Hall to the provincial capitol in Batangas City, to the De La Salle University and even to clients from whom he gets advertisements for his radio program.

"I have never-ending faith in God and constant inspiration from good people that God has brought to me along the way. It's just a matter of proving that they are right in trusting me," he said.


RONEL del Rio with his boss, Lipa City Mayor Vilma Santos-Recto. MEI MAGSINO

'Start looking for dead bodies,' Sabaya warns gov't



THE BURNHAMS, Martin and Gracia, in captivity for the last 11 months. REUTERS TV FILES

From page A1

But the bandit leader quickly added the lives of the hostages largely depend on the safety of the Abu Sayyaf members from pursuing government troops.

"*Halimbawa kung nakikita namin na tagilid kami sa labanan, siguro goodbye na lang sa dalawang ito* (If we see that we are being outfought, it's goodbye to these two)," Sabaya stressed.

Taunt

He taunted the Philippine and American governments saying that the continued captivity of the Burnhams was a great embarrassment for them and yet could not do anything.

SABAYA

"The US superpower can do nothing against us, so what more with the al-Qaida network? Ngayon, *ipinapakita na nila kung gaano ka palpak ang Balikatan 02*" (they have shown the uselessness of Balikatan 02), Sabaya said.

He also said the government could have saved billions of pesos, had it accepted his offer for negotiations.

Thousands of Filipino soldiers are searching for Abu Sayyaf in Basilan. Hundreds of US troops including the Special Forces are helping them with joint exercises.

Lt. Col. Danilo Servando, a spokesperson for the AFP Southern Command, dismissed Sabaya's statements as an effort to make it appear he was still part of the Abu Sayyaf.

"He was already ostracized by the main group and besides the hostages are not in his custody," Servando told the INQUIRER.

He said Sabaya and Khadaffy Janjalani had a falling out several months ago, but he did not elaborate.

Servando also said he doubted whether it was really Sabaya who was interviewed.

"There is that discrepancy in the voice of the original Sabaya and the one who was speaking with RMN," he said.

Servando also said the military was optimistic the Burnhams and Filipino nurse Ediborah Yap would be freed soon.

Reacting to observations that the military has been issuing assurances without concrete results, Southcom chief Lt. Gen. Roy Cimatu said patience should be needed in this kind of situation.

He told reporters in Davao City that the military was not remiss in its duties and that it was working hard to stomp out the bandits and to free the remaining hostages. ***With a report from Joselle d.R. Badilla, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Sergeant major bares coup recruitment

By Martin P. Marfil

CERTAIN groups tried to recruit soldiers for a coup attempt against the administration but were rejected.

This was disclosed by Master Chief Petty Officer Benjamin Rosario, one of eight sergeant majors representing the major services who signed a manifesto in a ceremony held yesterday for the press at Camp Aguinaldo.

"Again, political events warn of a coming storm," Rosario said in Filipino, reading from the manifesto. "Many groups are wooing and enticing our soldiers to join and help them seize power from those thrust into leading positions by the people."

However, he said, "the Filipino soldiers vow that they will not allow themselves to be used by people who want to seize power through the use of force and arms."

According to the manifesto, the Armed Forces will remain stable and united in the face of all groups who might launch a coup against those upholding the Constitution.

It also said the "chain of command" would be maintained.

Asked for details on the supposed recruitment for a coup attempt, Rosario said he had heard of only one incident outside Metro Manila. But he said he could not identify the supposed recruiters.

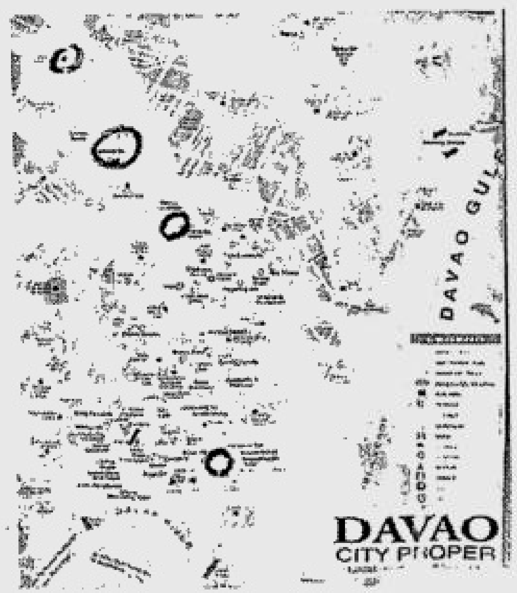
"It would be good to preempt them by reminding our colleagues of the experience of those who took part in earlier coup attempts," he said in Filipino.

Asked to comment on the recent statement of Linda Montayre, secretary general of the Philippine Consultative Assembly, that the country now had two Presidents, Rosario said there should only be one who was recognized by the people and the world.

"We will serve whoever is President," he said, naming Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

The other signatories to the manifesto were Senior Master Sergeant Ursula Juson, Chief Master Sergeants Ricardo Respicio, Reynaldo Aribon, Mario Gabriel, Cedric Reyes and Florante Hatulan and Master Chief Petty Officer Leonardo Apruebo.

Sergeant majors serve as links between the officers' corps and the enlisted personnel, and help in maintaining morale and discipline within the ranks.



SUPPOSED bombing targets are indicated on a map of Davao City seized at the house of one of the bombing suspects.

CAPTURED in Davao City: Abdul Munib, Danny Cadelon and Edris Bido, suspects in the April 21 bombing of General Santos City.

Cotabato blast kills 3, hurts 60

From page A1

where the victims were taken was chaotic. Nurses called for relatives of the wounded to donate blood for surgery.

The identities of the dead and wounded were not available at press time.

GenSan suspects

Earlier, in Davao City, police killed two more suspects in the April 21 bombings in General Santos City.

The clash that occurred less than eight hours before President Macapagal-Arroyo arrived there for a dialogue with the labor sector.

Three other members of the group believed involved in the April 21 explosions in General Santos City, which left 15 people dead and at least 60 others wounded, were captured in the early morning clash that began as a raid in Sta. Cruz town in Davao del Sur.

They are being interrogated at the regional headquarters of the Southern Mindanao police command here.

Chief Supt. Eduardo Matillano, Southern Mindanao police chief, identified those killed as Abdul Munib, 30, and Muhammad Magantor, 16, both of Datu Piang, Maguindanao. He named those arrested as Datu Salam Paglas, 30; Danny Cadelon, 30, also of Datu Piang; and Edris Bido, 42, of Darong in Sta. Cruz.

Matillano said Bido had been under surveillance for days. He said a team of police and military operatives armed with search warrants raided Bido's residence in Purok Lakatan in Sta. Cruz at 3 a.m. yesterday.

But Bido and his companions fired at the raiders and a clash ensued, Matillano said.

The raiders seized two improvised pipe bombs, the same type used in the General Santos explosions, a .45 cal pistol, a .38 cal revolver, a fragmentation grenade, a sack of ammonium nitrate, a plastic bag of ammonium nitrate fuel oil, an electronic timer, and assorted documents as well as a cassette tape bearing the name of chair Hashim Salamat of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

There was also a map of Davao City bearing pen markings which, police said, indicated supposed bombing targets.

Among the sites marked were the San Pedro Cathedral, the office of the Davao Light and Power Co., the Gaisano Mall and the Victoria Plaza.

Matillano expressed the belief that the suspected bombers were connected with the MILF, the Moro National Liberation Front and the Pentagon kidnap-for-ransom group.

Another blast

Yet another bomb exploded yesterday in Cotabato City, but police have yet to determine whether this could be linked to the series of explosions there and in General Santos.

Senior Supt. Sanggacala Dampac, Cotabato City police director, said the 12:30 a.m. blast destroyed a flower box in front of the house of Maguindanao provincial agriculturist Salik Panalunsong in Zenaida Subdivision.

No one was reported hurt.

"I have no idea why my house was bombed. I have no known enemies," Panalunsong said.

Senior Insp. Roger Legazpi, police station 2 chief, said the bomber might have planned the explosion to sow terror among the residents of nearby Notre Dame Village, who were celebrating their fiesta.

The bomb, made of ammonium nitrate and a timing device, went off a day after an explosion rocked the Polloc Port in Parang, Maguindanao.

Summary execution

In General Santos, the families of the four suspected Abu Sayyaf members slain in a reported clash on Tuesday accused the police of summary execution.

But Senior Supt. Bartolome Baluyot, Central Mindanao police director, said Duna Cawag Masla, 24, Dennis Cawag Masla, 22, Roger Garcia Benito, 25, and Rufino Baluso were killed in a legitimate encounter.

Baluyot said the four men were on board a *kumpit* and were about to dock at the shore of Barangay Bula when the clash took place.

He told reporters the four were Abu Sayyaf members responsible for the explosions here. He said police also recovered high-powered firearms and several documents indicating that the slain men were terrorists.

But Benito's wife Jasmin told the INQUIRER that around 2 p.m. Monday, she told him to buy medicine for their youngest child, who was suffering from diarrhea.

Benito worked for the Lorenzo Fishing company.

"I became anxious when he failed to return until Tuesday morning," she said. "I was shocked when I learned through the description made by radio reporters that my husband was among the four suspects killed. Believe me, my husband was a good man. He was not a terrorist."

Jasmin has yet to decide whether to file a formal complaint against the policemen involved in Tuesday's operation.

"I'm still deeply troubled. I don't know what to do . . . I don't exactly know how I will feed our three children," she said.

Duna Cawag Masla's wife Bainot has no plan to file charges.

"We want justice for Duna but we don't have money to hire lawyers. What we want at the moment is just to give him a decent burial," she told the INQUIRER.

Bainot said Duna and his younger brother Dennis left their house around 1:30 p.m. Monday to ply their tricycle routes.

Around 11:30 p.m., she received a text message from Duna saying they were on their way home.

The next day, she said she learned through the description made by radio reporters that her husband and brother-in-law had been killed.

Head wounds

Bainot denied that her husband was a terrorist.

"If our husbands were terrorists, do you think they would bring their families here?" she said.

The families of the slain men were also furious at the delay in the release of the corpses.

Muslims bury their dead within 24 hours.

An embalmer at the Labajo Funeral Homes, where the corpses were taken, observed that all bore gunshot wounds in the head.

"It was quite intriguing that all victims sustained gunshot wounds in the head considering that it was still dark when the encounter took place. Probably, the policemen who joined the operation were sharpshooters and were aided with night vision," the embalmer said.

"It was also quite unusual that the slain suspects wore casual clothes and leather shoes, as if they were going to a mall," he added.

Baluyot, however, challenged the victims' families to file charges. "I am going to face them in court. We are certain they were terrorists," he said.

The INQUIRER learned that the Masla brothers had pending arrest warrants in connection with a car theft case filed against them in a local court. ***Reports from Anthony S. Allada, Dennis Jay C. Santos, A. Mellejor, Edwin O. Fernandez and Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau, and AP***

Evolution:
Fact or Fallacy?

No one can deny that our complex universe is an astounding, majestic marvel. But how did it get here? Where did we come from? Does it really matter? Can it be, as so many contend, that this all just "happened" by some fortuitous cosmic accident? Or did it come about as the result of the careful design of an infinite God?

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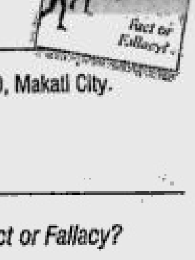
Delgado Sts., Iloilo City
May 4, 2002 2-5 PM

BICOL REGION
Bicol Science & Technology Centrum
J. Miranda Avenue, Naga City
May 4, 2002 10-12 AM



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GOV. SERING CUP

Local jumper, Muros protégé rip RP marks

By Marc Anthony Reyes

SOUTHEAST Asian Games silver medalist Narcisa Atienza and a protégé of the legendary Elma Muros posted record-breaking performances yesterday at the start of the Milo National Open/Gov. Sering Cup at the Rizal track oval.

The 20-year-old Atienza broke her RP high jump record, while 18-year-old Julie Rose Forbes bettered the national juniors mark in the 100m girls hurdles to assure themselves of slots in the Asian Amateur Athletics Association Grand Prix later this month.

The duo also outshone celebrated long-distance runner Eduardo Buenavista, who handily won the 3,000m steeplechase minus an impressive clocking.

"It's very hard to pursue a record time when you don't have any close rivals running by your side," said athletics chief Go Teng Kok of Buenavista, who finished in eight minutes, 50.30 seconds, way below the national mark of 8:35.09.

In a show of unity, top sports leaders led by Philippine Olympic Committee president Celso Dayrit, Philippine Sports Commission chair Eric Buhain and almost all national sports association presidents attended the opening ceremony and exhorted the athletes to give their best in the Asian Games.

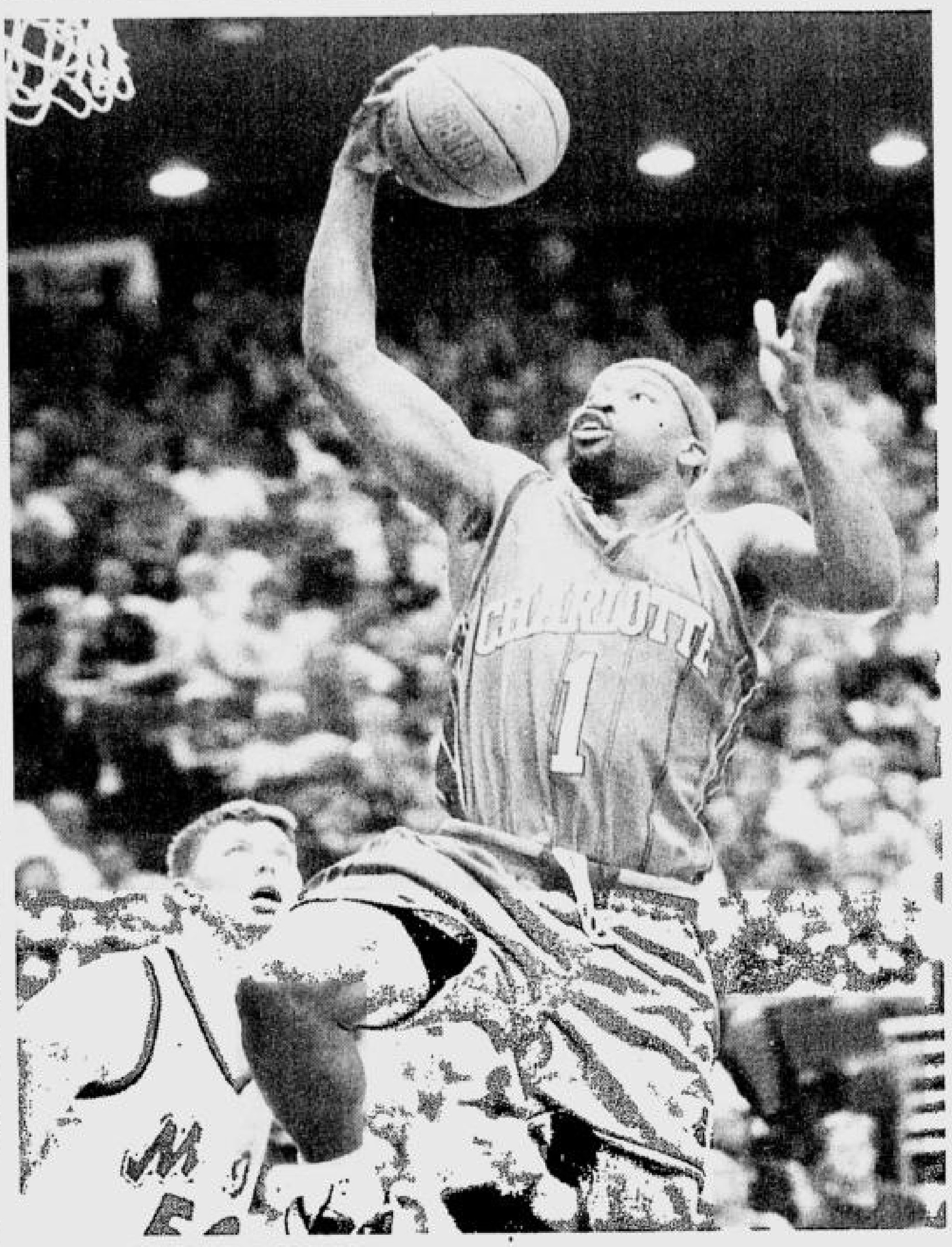
Still, Go said he was satisfied with the national team's performance, particularly that of 5-foot-9 Atienza, who turned in 1.75m or .05 meters better than the RP record she set in winning the silver medal in the Kuala Lumpur SEAG last year.

"I even scolded Nars because she doesn't give too much concentration on training," said Go of the University of Sto. Tomas athlete, who coaches on the side. "She has very good chances in the Asian Games because in long jump, every centimeter matters."

Forbes proved to be one of the day's prized finds, shattering the 15-second mark set by Mary Ann Bayot in 1997 by finishing in 14.95. She was immediately recommended by coach Jojo Posadas to the national developmental pool.

Naga ready for WNBL

THE NAGA City Sports Council and the city government of Naga expressed their readiness yesterday to host the 1st Women's National Basketball League on May 7-11. Chair Pedro Lee said the NCSC is privileged to host the historic event, adding the tournament for women has long been overdue. "It is high time that women, particularly in basketball, get an avenue to showcase their skills. The WNBL has been envisioned to do just that, and so we in the NCSC are doing everything to ensure the success of the tournament," said Lee.



ANOTHER TRIPLE-DOUBLE

Charlotte's Baron Davis (1) beats Orlando's Mike Miller to the basket during their game yesterday in Orlando, Florida. Davis starred with his second straight triple double as Charlotte eliminated Orlando, 102-85, in four games. Davis had 28 points, 11 rebounds and 10 assists. Davis averaged 27.5 points, 9.3 assists and nine rebounds for the Hornets, who are awaiting league approval to relocate to New Orleans for next season. In Indianapolis, Austin Croshere and Ron Artest each scored 18 points as Indiana beat New Jersey, 97-74, in Game 4 of their first-round best-of-five playoff series. Game 5 is Thursday night (Friday in Manila) in New Jersey, where the teams split the first two games. The winner will face Charlotte in a best-of-seven series for the Eastern plum.

ICTSI La Salle, Shark hurdle PBL rivals

ICTSI-La Salle kept its poise down the stretch to turn back Montaña Pawnshop, 68-65, yesterday in the 2002 PBL Chairman's Cup at the Makati Coliseum.

Willy Wilson, who led with 17 points, five rebounds and three assists, drilled in the deciding freethrows that avenged the ICTSI Archers' 72-76 setback to the Jewelers on April 12 and handed them their sixth win in eight games.

Ateneo-Hapee-Negros Navigation leads the field with a 5-1 card.

The Jewelers suffered their sixth defeat in seven outings.

"We should give credit to Montaña for playing a good game. But our poise down the stretch was intact, the boys played solid defense toward the end," said ICTSI-La Salle coach Franz Pumaren.

"Mike Cortez played off, obviously still tired from his record performance against Kutitap. Good thing Wilson and (Ronald) Cuan took over and defended well against (Sunday) Salvacion and Mark Macapagal," he added.

The game went through five deadlocks and 15 turnovers, with Montaña enjoying a 62-59 edge following Macapagal's freethrows off Wilson, 3:40 remaining.

Shark Energy Drink banked on a three-pointer by John Bravo and two freethrows by Ismael Junio to beat John-O, 69-66, in the nightcap and raise its record to 4-3. John-O slipped to 4-4.

The Energy Drink Kings drew a fine performance from recruit Al Vergara, who took over the playmaking chores after Warren Ybanez strained his shoulder.

The scores:

ICTSI-LA SALLE 68—Wilson 17, Cuan 14, Omolon 11, Uy 6, Cortez 4, Sta. Maria 4, Yap 4, Magsumbol 2, Ramos 2, Franco 2, Daep 2, Zamora 0.

MONTAÑA 65—Salvacion 18, Alfad 15, Mesina 7, Kalaw 7, Macapagal 6, Marucot 5, Tolentino 2, Sinco 2, Coronel 0, Falcasantos 0, Lim 0.

Quarters: 15-17; 33-29; 51-53; 68-65

Flowers powers Gapo to Northern leadership

By Roy Luarca

OLONGAPO CITY—Jeffrey Flowers proved to be an immovable force inside the paint as the Olongapo Volunteers repulsed the Cebuana Lhuillier Gems, 112-110, Tuesday night in the MBA First Conference at the Olongapo Convention Center here.

The Volunteers, with Flowers accounting for 36 points and 15 rebounds, led by as many as 17 points but had to pool their talents in the fourth quarter to post their fifth win in seven games and keep the lead in the Northern Conference.

The Gems fell to 5-2 and dropped to a share of the lead in the Southern Conference. Tied with Cebuana Lhuillier is RCPI Negros, while close behind at 5-3 is Professional Davao.

The Eagles rode on another fine performance by prized acquisition Cid White to dump the LBC Batangas Blades, 77-60, in the lone game at the newly built Davao Oriental Sports and Cultural Center in Mati, Davao Oriental.

It was the first time that a professional basketball game was stage in the city, a leisurely three-hour drive from Davao, and fans filled the 7,000-seater gym to watch their Eagles humble the Blades.

Among those who watched the game were Davao Oriental Gov. Elena Palma-Gil, Vice Governor Thelma Almario, Rep. Joel Mayo Almario, Mati Mayor Francisco Rabat and members of the Mati City Council.

Spring Oil wins, stays alive in KL

KUALA Lumpur, Malaysia—The Philippines' Spring Cooking Oil team nipped Hong Kong's Winling, 107-105, in overtime Tuesday night to level its record at 1-1 in the 13th ABC Champions' Cup basketball tournament at the MABA gym here.

Seven-time PBA Best Import Bobby Parks and high-leaping Geremy Robinson led Spring's offensive with 33 and 32 points, respectively, but it was former PBA player Erwin Luna who provided the wining basket in the last 16 seconds on a drop pass by Parks.

Co-owned by national shooting champion Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla and Herbert de Jesus, Spring led 42-36 at halftime. But Scott Peterson sparked a big HK comeback that kept the game close until the wire.

The victory boosted Spring's chances of making it to the semifinals of the prestigious 10-team cagefest. Coach Tito Palma's boys dropped their opening match to Korea, 96-101, last Sunday, but the Koreans fell to the HK squad, 77-99, Monday.

"We battled taller rivals, including their (6-11 and 6-7) imports. But the boys gave their best and showed big fighting hearts," said Palma.

Joel Co, a former Socsargen star in the MBA, knocked in 27 points, including two free throws in the last eight seconds of regulation which sent the game into overtime at 95.

Nissan Exalta homeward bound

VALENCIA, Bukidnon—As the four-man Nissan Exalta GS Superio crew revs up for its journey back to the Luzon mainland, seasoned marathoner Andy Dysangco expressed confidence yesterday he would drive "with much success", the sparkling silver sedan back on Saturday to Greenbelt in Makati.

By then, he will have established a new mark in the Pan Philippine Marathon.

The Exalta is expected to arrive before 10 a.m. of Saturday at the chic Greenbelt area for a huge welcome party organized by top Nissan officials led by Vir Diwa and Tonette Lee at the National Sports Grill.

The Exalta had a kilometer reading of 27,942 on its Caltex Havoline odometer when it boarded a ferry Tuesday for Liloan, Leyte, where it will run non-stop before heading back to Matnog, Sorsogon, for its assault of Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon).

Dysangco is bunched with Robbie David, Apey Garcia and Bebot Roque on a trip back to their Visayan homebase in Carigara, the hometown of the late marathon pioneer Ronnie Pasola.

The Exalta, which sports a fuel efficient but growling QG 1.6-liter, 116-horsepower engine, actually racked up a total of 23,000 km in the Visayas and Mindanao.

3 venues host Milo cage school

MILO BEST Center's second set of summer basketball classes unwraps today simultaneously at the Ateneo College covered courts, Flos Carmeli Institution in Fairview and Arellano University in Caniogan, Pasig.

Classes will be conducted in various levels in these three venues every Monday and Thursday until May 27.

Interested parties may contact The BEST Center at 372-3065/66 and 411-6260.

Registration fee for the country's most popular cage school is P1,500 including a uniform T-shirt.

Milo BEST Center has also scheduled clinics at Notre Dame of Greater Manila in Caloocan City, Arellano University (Legarda and Pasay) and Jose Rizal University every Tuesday and Friday from May 3 to 28 and at St. Benedict College in Alabang Hills and Barangay BF multi-purpose gym in BF Homes, Parañaque every Wednesday and Saturday from May 4 to 29.

The listing for Level 1 sessions for all ages at Ateneo and Levels 1 and 2 clinics at Notre Dame is already closed, but registration is still open for Levels 2, 3, 4 and refresher classes at Ateneo.

There are also slots still available in the other venues.

MTBA Open stakes ₱.2M

PRIZES worth P250,000 will be up for grabs in the 34th MTBA Anniversary Open championships which unwraps at 1 p.m. today at the New Bowling Inn on Taft Avenue.

The major awards in the tourney sanctioned by the Philippine Bowling Congress are P100,000 for the perfect-game scorer and P50,000 and P12,000 for the Masters and team champions, respectively, and P6,000 each for the doubles, singles and all-event topnotchers.

The modified FIQ format which allows both men and ladies to play together with handicaps will apply, according to MTBA president Jaime Dychauco.

Among those invited to grace today's opening ceremony are former Congressman Peping Cojuangco, Richie Garcia, PBC president Steve Hontiveros, four-time World Cup champion Paeng Nepomuceno, multititled Bong Coo and presidents of all PBC-affiliated associations.

The best secret of BEST

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

A FRIEND of Nic Jorge's called to say Nic ought to be given a pat on the back.

"He's been around too long and I just feel people like you should write something nice about him," he said. "Pu-leeez do it?"

He's right. For 23 years now, Nic Jorge has been around with his BEST, the best ever basketball school this side of the globe.

Now, here's a secret I've kept for more than 20 years: I've enrolled my own son, Dayong, at Nic's BEST in the Eighties. Without Nic's knowledge for, knowing Nic, he would have pampered the kid. Nic's heart is as huge as his weight.

From Nic's BEST, my son went on to pass auditions for the Philippine Youth Team and the UP Maroons (training team under Joe Lipa). But Dayong's Fine Arts/UP Masters degrees prevented him from pursuing a full-fledged career in basketball. This is not to say that Sol, Dayong's mother, was vehemently opposed to my son's dream to go full-time in basketball for her eternal fear "that he might break his arm and that could mean the end of his career in Fine Arts."

Dayong, for the record, has nailed his two diplomas, the second one being his Masters in Fine Arts. Basketball being his other passion, Dayong is back to the hardcourt. But not as a player anymore. He is now assistant coach both to Leo Austria (Shark Energy Drink) and Louie Alas (Letran Knights). He has not abandoned painting; he's had two one-man shows since 1997 and several group exhibits.

Now Nic, aren't you proud of your product?

Frankly, I told Nic Jorge's friend that Nic, a former MVP of the UAAP while playing as a UP Maroon, doesn't just need a pat on the back. Nic, the RP Team coach to the 1978 World Basketball Championship, needs to be given a doctorate degree, honoris causa, for not only teaching BEST kids how to play basketball correctly but more importantly, how to properly handle a life minus basketball.

Dayong is my best witness to that.

■

Mayo turns 5 today. His birthday wish is to watch Spiderman. Another wish is to hold his afternoon party in the house of Sol Juvida, my sun for 30 years.

"All the time," said Sol J, hugging Mayo warmly. "I will even prepare your favorite spaghetti."

Mayo, who for all I know is the youngest Beatlemaniac on Earth (he has started calling himself George Harrison months before the Silent Beatle died last November), sports the Beatle hairdo. He now refuses to have a haircut if I don't have my hair cut first.

They say a man can start enjoying the sunset when he's written a book, planted a seedling of any tree whether fruit bearing or not, and fathered a son.

I've done all three.

As toilers for the rich, we receive each a bonus from our bosses in the month of May.

Mayo's arrival 5 years ago was a bonus nonpareil.

I watch the sunset, and he's my rocking chair.

I sit by the fireplace, and he's my rocking chair.

I sing Rocky Raccoon, Blackbird or Mother Nature's Son, and he's both my rocking chair and, well, applauder and second voice at the same time.

I couldn't ask for more.

Happy birthday, Mayo.

SPORTSWATCH

Matalote, Gregorio pace youth bowling

VETERAN Jun Matalote and Geena Gregorio grabbed the early lead in men's and ladies (A & B) singles in the ongoing 27th Grand National and 8th Youth duckpin bowling tournament at Puyat Sports Center in Starmall. Matalote rolled 407 pins to pace Jimmy Garcera (394), Bert Gera (390), Jer Torres (389) and Hermie Castillo (387) while Gregorio tallied 391 to move ahead of PHIDBC president Inez Magbual (386), Meanne dela Cruz (375), Maa Aregla (372) and Emma Nadura (353). Eddie Iligan and Grace Ocampo showed the way in class C men's and ladies singles with 390 and 367, respectively. Other top scorers are Manny Ramos (387), Carlos Inocencio (387), Bobot Escobar (386) and Glen King (370) in the men's class and Vicky Santos (365), Bho Odogan (352), Lrie Garcia (347) and Mercy Menzero (346) in the ladies' group.

Mandaluyong puts up Ucap 7-Cocker

THE 10TH Ucap R and B Farm 7-Cock Derby gets under way today at the Mandaluyong Coliseum, with Sagupaan Super Feeds and Washout Shampoo of Lakpue Drug as sponsors. Unheralded but resurgent Anito MB of Palawan and Mauro Prieto took the lead Tuesday after posting three victories. Also in the hunt were Ucap Cocker of the Year top contender Pol Estrellado (PE San Pablo Hammer), back-to-back Ucap Stagfighter of the Year Sonny Lagon and Mayor Joel Brillantes (Blue Blade Blade JBB), Alex Tang (Guts and Glory) and Boy de Roca (BL Jojit 128). With two victories apiece were BJ Greenwood and BJ Greenwood I, Low Profile, King Boxer, Arnis Master, San Pedro GP, Bumble Bee Balbina, Sir Vincent and TR Phoenix BL. Meanwhile, the 11th Ucap 7-Cock Derby is slated next week, May 7 and 9, with Mayor Gerry "Boy" Espina, Alan Tan, Patrick Puno, Larry Amante, John Capinpin and Madlambayan Brothers as hosts. The 12th Ucap 7-Cock Derby of lawyer Rudy Salud, Lito Orillaza and ESM Ruel will be held on May 14 and 16. For other inquiries, call 531-4003, 531-5005, 534-4110 and 535-2341.

Salud, Antonio Pasay derby headliners

COCKFIGHTING resumes at the Pasay City Cockpit tomorrow, Friday, with the staging of the PCC Bigtime 5-cock derby. Submission of weights will be today only, from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. and interested parties may call 816-6750, 843-1890 and 843-1746. The guaranteed prize is P400,000, according to host Benjie Lim who also confirmed the participation of at least 25 cockers and gamefowl breeders from Metro Manila and nearby provinces. The list of participants include Patrick Antonio, Tony Lasala, Vic Yu, Raymond Velayo, Daday Siochi, Tony Litonjua, Ram Lopez, Boy de Roca, lawyer Romero Yu, Lito Orillaza, lawyer Rudy Salud, William Go, Lito Alcantara, Ruther Batuigas and Cito Manansala. Meanwhile, pit managers Oscar Gonzales, Eric dela Rosa and Butchoy Olano announced that regular hackfights are held at PCC every Sunday, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

NATIONAL CHESS

Mark stuns Joey, surges ahead

PARAGUA

Standings after seven rounds:

Men's: Paragua 5.5 points; Gomez, Garma 5; Mariano, Roca 4.5; Torre, Villamayor 4; Sanchez, Antonio 3.5; Bancod, Ranola, Nadera 3; Milagrosa, Barbosa 2.5; Sumngat 1.5; Merelos 1.

Standings after six rounds:

Women's: Lomibao, Mendoza 5 points; Castellano 4.5; Joya 4; Mariano 3.5; Cua 3; Castro, Rivera, Abanes, Cruz 2.5; Espallardo, Torres 2; Dela Cruz, Toledo 1.5.

INTERNATIONAL Master Mark Paragua, the 18-year-old teener who would become, grandmaster someday, provided a glimpse of the future with a huge upset win over GM Rogelio "Joey" Antonio in the seventh round of the Grand Finals of the National Chess Championship at the All Asia Center in Paseo de Roxas, Makati City yesterday.

Paragua outplayed the 38-year-old Antonio in a tense endgame of their Scotch encounter and went on to wrest the lead with 5.5 points going into the eighth round of the tournament organized by the National Chess Federation of the Philippines and hosted by Lex Development Corp.

The former child prodigy is now ahead of his closest pursuers by a half point, with Chito Garma and NM John Paul Gomez tied for 2nd to 3rd places with five points apiece.

Garma opted for a draw with NM Petronio Roca in the seventh round, while Gomez, coming off a draw with NM Yves Ranola, downed NM Joseph Sanchez in 36 moves of a Sicilian.

GM Eugene Torre inched back into contention following two straight victories in rounds sixth and seventh to be with fellow GM Bong Villamayor in a tie for 6th to 7th places.

Torre, who lost twice in a row, defeated NM Alex Milagrosa in the sixth round, and followed it up with another convincing win over IM Barlo Nadera in the seventh round yesterday. Villamayor, on the other hand, routed Melvin Merelos in only 17 moves of an Old Indian.

They trail NM Roca and IM Nelson Mariano, who outsteadied Milagrosa in 62 moves of a Sicilian. Roca and Mariano had 4.5 points each.

The win also had Paragua slicing Antonio's lead to 2-1 in their head-to-head duel. Their last encounter in the Asian Zonal held here ended in a draw.

Karpov defeats Kramnik at Eurotel

PRAGUE, Czech Republic—Anatoly Karpov's stunning victory over fellow-Russian Vladimir Kramnik in the second round of the Eurotel World Chess Trophy tournament in Prague on Tuesday showed he's still a force to be reckoned with.

The first game of the two-game match was a 25-move draw that grandmaster Vlastimil Hort of Germany called "dull." But in the second game, Karpov, seeded 15 in the tournament, got an advantage out of the opening and nursed it to victory over his second-seeded opponent.

Top-seed Kasparov of Russia had to traverse a minefield in both of his games against Hungarian Judit Polgar. He won both games. Polgar is the highest-rated woman ever.

In a match of former FIDE world champions, Viswanathan Anand of India handily defeated Alexander Khalifman of Russia by winning both games.

Twenty-first seeded Ivan Sokolov of Bosnia ousted fifth-seeded Michael Adams of England. In the first round, Sokolov upset 12th-seeded Peter Leko of Hungary. He won a wild first game and held a draw in the second.

In the other matches, Alexander Morozevich of Russia eliminated his compatriot Alexander Grischuk, and Alexei Shirov of Spain defeated Artur Jussupow of Germany, both with a score of 2-0. Ukrainian Vassily Ivanchuk ousted Boris Gelfand of Israel, and Veselin Topalov of Bulgaria beat Russian Peter Svidler, both by scores of 1.5-0.5.

The event has attracted 32 of the world's top players who are competing for an almost unprecedented purse of 500,000 euros ($450,000). The only top player absent from the event is FIDE world champion Ruslan Ponomariov of Ukraine, who is currently ranked sixth in the world. *AP*

BLAST FROM THE PAST

TODAY in 1992, Jethro "Jet" Dionisio snatched five out of seven stages in 58.87 seconds to retain his title in the 1992 World Speed Shooting Challenge in Bakersfield, California. Also today in 1996, Denise Cojuangco clocked 36.51 seconds in the jumpoff to claim the silver medal in the Monte Carlo Grand Prix in Monaco.

INTER-PROVINCIAL CHESS

Representatives of the provincial government of Pampanga and the National Chess Federation sign the agreement for the staging of the 2002 National Inter-Provincial Chess Team championship in San Fernando, Pampanga starting June 17. Seated from left are Provincial Board Member Robert David, representing Governor Lito Lapid, NCFP secretary general lawyer Sammy Estimo, Leila Astronomia and lawyer Enrique Basa.

SPORTS ON TV

Compiled by
Lorenzo Manguiat

BASKETBALL: NBA playoffs, First Round—Boston Celtics vs Philadelphia 76ers, Game 4 at 10 p.m. on NBN

GOLF: PGA Greater Greensboro Chrysler Classic, Final Round at 2 p.m. (r), Highlights at 11 p.m. on Star Sports

LPGA Longs Drugs Challenge, First Round at 5 p.m. on Star Sports

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Model	110 CDI
Engine type	OM 611 LA Turbo / Intercool
Cylinders	4
Displacement (cm^3)	2151
Rated output in kW (hp)	75 (102)/3800/min.
Torque rating in Nm/rev	250/1600 - 2400/min.
Transmission	Automatic 4-speed with dynamic shift program/dash-mounted
Fuel consumption in kms./litre	
Urban cycle	10.4
Extra urban	16.2
Combined	13.3
Co2 emissions (g/km)	207 213
Acceleration 0-100 kph/h	18.2 sec.
Maximum speed	155 km/h
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Niño makes round-of-16

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—Ninth seed Niño Salvador of San Sebastian College outplayed Vedasto Magpantay, 6-2, 6-2, Tuesday night to advance in the third round of the first Coca-Cola National Tennis Championships at the International Tennis Center here.

Salvador's victory sent him up against Ricardo Lagac Jr., who scored a 6-0, 6-2 victory over La Salle's Chase Tinio.

No. 12 Luisito Clores outplayed UST's Gabby Remigio, 6-2, 6-3, to advance against fifth seed Rolando Ruel while No. 16 defeated Glenn Guanes, 6-2, 6-0, to advance against No. 2 Adelo Abadia.

Former Davis Cupper and national coach Beeyong Sison stamped his class over Davao City's Rollyto Litang, 6-1, 6-0, to complete the round-of-16 cast in this Group 1 event presented by Coca-Cola Bottlers Inc. and supported by Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority Chair Felicito Payumo.

In the men's doubles, top seeds Johnny Arcilla and Adelo Abadia demolished Hanky Lee and Randy Villanueva, 6-1, 6-1 to reach the quarterfinals.

Arcilla and Abadia, both members of the RP Davis Cup team, will face Antonio Sagansay and Gilbert Estrada.

Ho advances

BOY'S 12-under fifth seed Joshua Tan Ho of Xavier School defeated Simeon Samaniego, 6-0, 6-1, yesterday to gain a third-round berth in the first Enervon International Junior Tennis Challenge at the Rizal Memorial tennis Center. Tan Ho, the 10-under champion in Malaysia last year, will meet Juan Carlo Pantua, who demolished Renan Mirto, 6-0, 6-0.

SPORTSWATCH

St. Vincent cops 3 golds

BAGUIO'S St. Vincent College stole the show by bagging three gold medals in the senior's men's advance division of the recent Petron New Face of the Year taekwondo championships at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium. The gold winners were finweight Edward Buliyat, flyweight Michael Limon and welterweight Bernard Valiente. Four teams shared the honors in the women's advance group by winning a gold each. DLSU's Rebecca Paras, Makati's Rosalie Diaz, DPS' Sabrina Simbulan and UP's Ria Carmelia Cruz took the fin, fly, bantam/feather and light/heavy golds, respectively.

Johannesburg arrives

LEXINGTON, Kentucky—Johannesburg and Castle Gandolfo finally arrived in Kentucky, under the same shroud of secrecy that has characterized the Irish-based 3-year-olds for months. The horses stepped off a chartered plane and onto a partitioned ramp at Blue Grass Airport on Tuesday and were immediately loaded into a horse van for the short drive to a quarantine barn at Keeneland. They arrived at the barn about 40 minutes later with Castle Gandolfo stepping off the van first, followed by Johannesburg. The two, wearing maroon blankets that covered them from shoulder to tail, were quickly examined and rushed into the barn as several photographers tried to get pictures before they disappeared. The two are expected to clear quarantine as early as Wednesday evening and work once or twice at Keeneland before shipping to Churchill Downs for the Kentucky Derby early Saturday, the morning of the race. *AP*

BASEBALL RESULTS

AMERICAN LEAGUE

Boston 4, Baltimore 0; Texas 10, Toronto 3; Anaheim 21, Cleveland 2; N.Y. Yankees 8, Oakland 2; Detroit 9, Kansas City 3; Minnesota 6, Tampa Bay 3; Chicago White Sox 8, Seattle 4.

NATIONAL LEAGUE

Montreal 5, Houston 1; Milwaukee 4, Atlanta 3; Florida 7, St. Louis 2; Colorado 10, Pittsburgh 0; N.Y. Mets 10, Arizona 1; San Diego 2, Chicago Cubs 1; Cincinnati 3, Los Angeles 1; Philadelphia 8, San Francisco 2. *AP*

MALARAYAT GM

Arch. Antonio Turalba Jr., Club Malarayat's general manager, sees the flight of his ball after a shot during the recent Liberica Golf Invitational held at Club Malarayat's 27-hole golf course in Lipa, Batangas. Club Malarayat, an Active Group project, is designed to be an all-weather golf course.

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P'foods, SMB seek 2-0 lead

GAMES TODAY *(Philsports)*
6 p.m.—San Miguel vs Alaska
8 p.m.—Purefoods vs Coca-Cola

By June Navarro

PUREFOODS and San Miguel Beer, pacesetters in their respective semifinal circuit, strive to move closer to a championship appearance today in the PBA Samsung Governors Cup at the Philsports Arena.

Taking the opener of their semifinal clash over Coca-Cola and Alaska in convincing fashion, the Hotdogs and the Beermen shoot for another victory that will grant them a comfortable 2-0 lead in the best-of-five series.

Coach Ryan Gregorio and his TJ Hotdogs patiently worked their way to turn back the Tigers, 89-86, while the Beermen leaned on Boybits Victoria's nine triples to post a 72-66 victory over the Aces.

"This is a race and we now have the psychological advantage. Another win would make us practically on top of the situation," said Gregorio after avenging an 89-69 elimination round loss to the Tigers.

Derrick Brown towed the Hotdogs to victory after scoring eight of his team's last 12 points, including an 18-footer in the final 30 seconds that took the sting out of the Tigers.

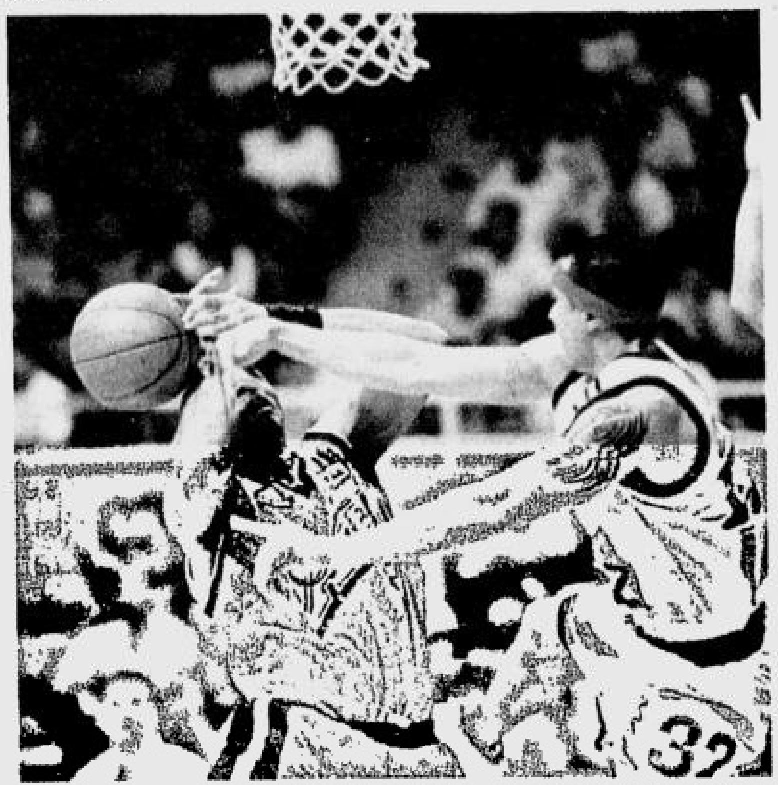
But Gregorio believes his wards wouldn't win riding on offensive skills alone.

"With Ron Hale and Roselle Ellis combining for more than 50 points a night, it would be very hard to outscore them. At that, we have to win on defense," said Gregorio, a former UP Maroon.

Kelvin Price, Kerby Raymundo and Richard Yee provided the crucial stops that held Ellis scoreless in the last 10 minutes and forced Hale to miss a potential game-tying triple with seven ticks left.

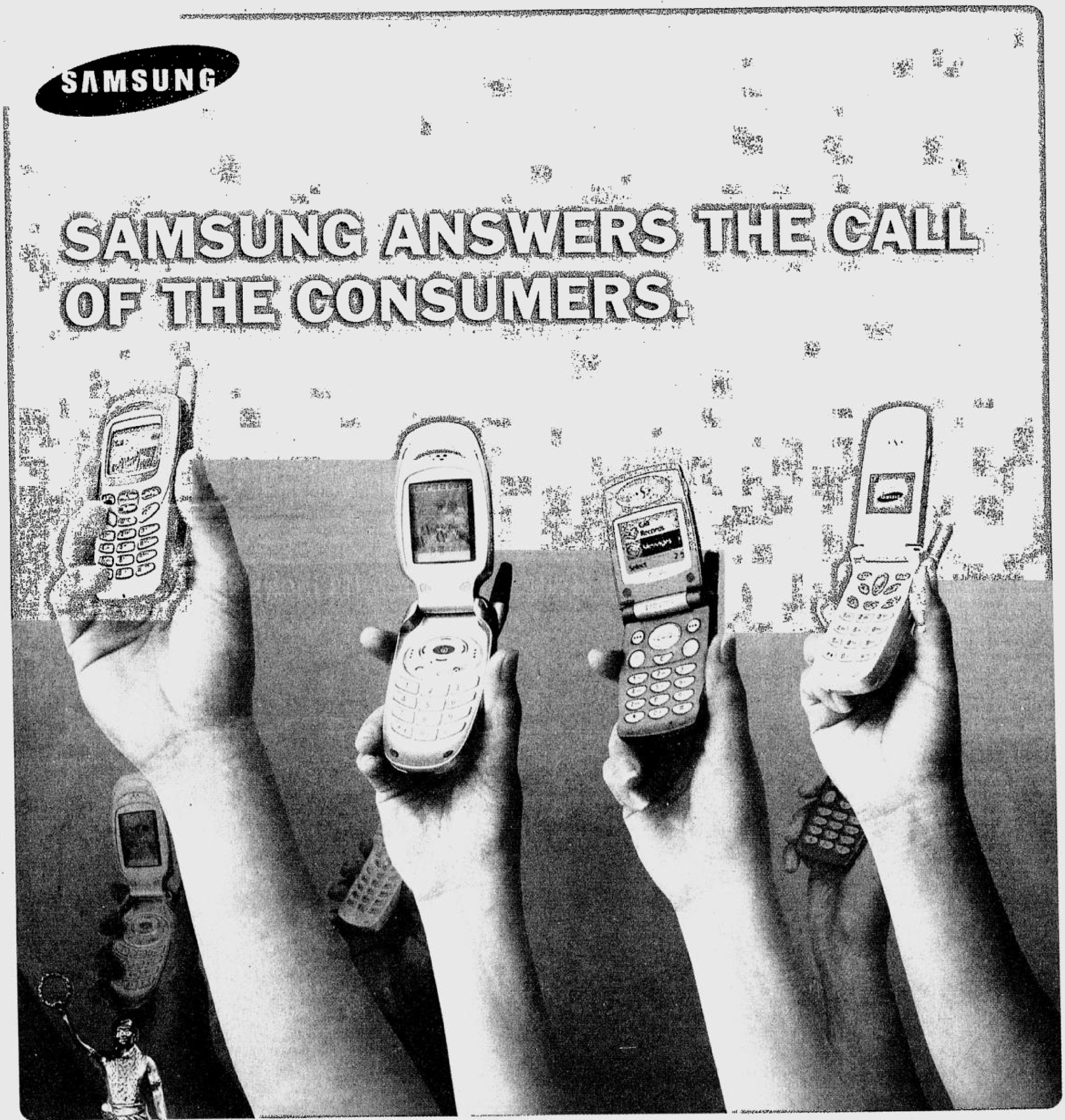
That victory poised the Beermen to sustain a trend in the last two years where they ran over the Aces in two Commissioner's Cup tournaments on the way to the Finals.

The Beermen eliminated the Aces in the semifinals of the 2000 and 2001 Commissioner's Cup events and another win tonight would mean a third straight semifinal victory over the Aces is in the offing.


ROMY HOMILLADA

ALASKA import James Head gets fouled by San Miguel Beer's Rob Duat (right) during their PBA game Tuesday. San Miguel won, 72-66.

SAMSUNG



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Cop killed in Sta. Cruz robbery /A24
QC mayor, aides charged /A24

METRO

Editor Louie C. Camino

Man out to kill FVR caught at Big Dome

JOSEPH Venezuela, center, was arrested for possession of deadly weapons just as he was about to enter the Araneta Coliseum where President Macapagal-Arroyo addressed a Labor Day gathering yesterday.

RANDY HORMILLOSA

By Agnes E. Donato

A MAN disguised as a member of the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (TUCP), who claimed he wanted to kill former President Fidel Ramos, was arrested yesterday when security officers of the Araneta Coliseum found pointed weapons in his possession.

Suspect Joseph Venezuela, 29, of Kalawaan, Pasig City, was nabbed about 12:30 p.m. when he tried to enter the coliseum through the wrong gate.

Top government officials led by President Macapagal-Arroyo gathered at the Araneta Coliseum yesterday to pay tribute to labor leaders for the Labor Day celebration.

Police found in Venezuela's possession a screwdriver, an icepick inserted in a steel pipe, a bottle of beer and some drugs.

Venezuela, who was clad in a military uniform at the time of his arrest, said he went to the Araneta Coliseum to kill Ramos whom he blamed for his father's death.

It was not immediately known if Ramos attended yesterday's celebration at the coliseum.

Venezuela charged that the corruption during the Ramos administration led to the death of his father, who was a former member of the Central Intelligence Service.

The suspect admitted he was forced to go on leave from his work as a security guard after he was diagnosed to have suffered from severe paranoia.

Venezuela was detained at the Central Police District station in Cubao, Quezon City. He is facing charges of illegal possession of deadly weapons and illegal use of military uniform. *With a report from Angeli A. Alagcan*

End of a new road

VIRGILIO de Vera, 26, was all set to start a new life after having served a year in prison.

Assassins foiled his walk to a new road.

De Vera, of 2207 Anonas St. in Sta. Mesa, Manila, was shot dead shortly after midnight Tuesday.

He was ambushed by still unidentified suspects riding a blue car along Damka Streeet corner Old Sta. Mesa, Manila.

Detective Edgardo Ko of the Western Police District-homicide section said the victim had just been released from Manila City Jail after serving a year in prison for a drug-related case.

But De Vera apparently felt uneasy about his newfound freedom.

Ko said the victim was "very suspicious" after his release. He also "appeared to be avoiding someone."

Before leaving their house, De Vera told his mother he would be out for two days. The victim carried a bag containing clothes, Ko said.

But at around 12:20 a.m., witnesses saw the victim getting off a blue car which came from San Juan, Ko added.

De Vera's acquaintances in the car did not want him to get far alive.

The unidentified passengers suddenly pulled out their guns and spread the victim with bullets before driving off.

De Vera fell on the roadside.

He died on the spot. ***Philip C. Tubeza, Edson C. Tandoc Jr.***

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13 suspects arrested, PCI Bank rob foiled

By Agnes E. Donato

POLICE nabbed 13 suspected robbers before they could hold up a bank in Quezon City on Tuesday afternoon.

Arrested were Aladin Malinao, 24; Manuel Maturan, 42; Marciano Banzuela, 34; Nicolas Gonzaga, 36; Jesus Mentes, 29; Cladio Sacro, 25; Baltazar Dicorion, 28; Armando Dehino, 29; Carlos Saas, 30; Raymund Martin, 28; Elizalde Pido, 28; Jimmy Espina, 26; and Noel Ortiz, 28.

They are believed to be behind the series of bank robberies in Quezon City.

The group was apprehended while they were about to rob the Equitable PCI Bank in Roosevelt Avenue, Quezon City about 2:30 p.m. Tuesday.

Operatives of the Central Police District spotted the suspects in front of the bank on Roosevelt near Del Pilar Street, catching the robbers by surprise.

None of the suspects were reported to have resisted arrest.

Recovered from them were assorted firearms and two motorcycles.

They have been detained at the CPD Criminal Investigation Unit and are facing charges of robbery and illegal possession of firearms.

Police said the group had been under surveillance for their alleged illegal activities for two months now.

A tip from an informant led the police to finally trace the suspects' whereabouts.

At least three victims and witnesses have come forward at the police headquarters and identified the suspects as the ones who had robbed them in separate incidents. ***With a report from Angeli A. Alagcan***

Rapist has an 'obedient son'

A MUNTINLUPA court has sentenced a man to life imprisonment for raping a 15-year-old runaway girl five years ago.

The victim had just left home on April 2, 1997 when Danilo Bersamina raped her inside a water tank shack located beside his house in Alabang, according to the eight-page decision of Judge N.C. Perello.

Prior to the incident, Bersamina's 13-year-old son asked the victim to proceed to his father's house since the father "would like to talk to her about a very important matter," court records showed.

The son was later accused of conspiring with his father in raping the victim. Buf the court said he merely did an errand as a "willing and obedient son."

In his defense, Bersamina admitted that he and the girl were locked inside the water tank shack at the time of the incident. But he denied that he raped the victim.

The court did not find his testimony convincing. ***Christian Esguerra***

Observing GMA up close and personal

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

THE PARENTS of 27-year-old Tristan Ngo, arrested by anti-narcotics agents in an alleged buy-bust operation and now detained at the Quezon City Jail, are asking that their son be made to undergo a drug test.

The test will determine whether Tristan, a "special child," is a user of shabu (methamphetamine hydrochloride) or the "classier" drug cocaine which his captors claim was confiscated from him.

Most drug pushers are addicts. They push to support their habit.

***

As I said in the previous columns, Tristan couldn't have been using drugs. He is about 300 pounds. He walks like a lumbering bear. Although he talks like a "normal" person, you can sense that he is a simple-minded boy by the way he talks.

Users of shabu or the much more expensive cocaine, which is hard to come by in this country, are thin or slight of build. Why? Because they are always fidgety and highly mobile, they can't sleep, they don't have appetite. Shabu is used by people who desperately want to slim down, or students who cram for their exams.

I can't talk for Tristan's billiard buddies who were arrested along with him. But I am certain that if they put him on a test, the results will say he's negative for drugs.

***

I believe Tristan is innocent of the drug-pushing charge. I grant that one of Tristan's buddies was under surveillance and the cops finally pounced on him at the Derick's Billiard Hall parking lot.

But the cops included Tristan in their haul because they thought that since he was a friend of the guy they had placed under surveillance, he was also his drug accomplice.

Anti-narcotics cops—or any other cop for that matter—should never arrest people on the basis of "guilt by association."

***

Last weekend, I had the good fortune of observing up close and personal what President Macapagal does during her rare, short vacations: She takes her work along with her.

While scuba diving at the world-famous Tubbataha Reef in Palawan, she took Energy Secretary Vince Perez with her. Perez is an experienced scuba diver.

At the presidential yacht Ang Pangulo, where she, First Gentleman Mike Arroyo, daughter Lulli and fellow divers stayed, she closeted herself and Perez for an hour or so to talk about how to improve the economy further.

***

I learned from the first gentleman that she always takes with her in all her trips one of three Cabinet members, or all of them: Perez of Energy, Lito Camacho of Finance, and Mar Roxas of Trade.

"These three bright guys are interchangeable in their positions. Perez can substitute for Camacho or Camacho for Roxas or Roxas for Perez when Gloria wants to talk about the economy," said Mike at the ship's spacious lounge.

Perez and Roxas are graduates of Wharton while Camacho is a product of Harvard. All are in their early 40s and multi-millionaires. One of them, Perez, used to be her student at the Ateneo graduate school of economics.

Asked what she and the President discussed in one of the rooms, the Wharton-graduate Perez said it was a wide-ranging Cabinet meeting of sorts but without the pressure.

***

After Marcos, the only other president that took his work along during vacations was Fidel V. Ramos.

Ramos and Macapagal-Arroyo are both workaholics. He acquired the habit of working during vacations from being a military officer, and she from being a professor of economics. A teacher still works even when she's already home to check the papers of his or her students.

Most of the far-reaching decisions made by Mr. Ramos were arrived at when he was outside Malacañang.

***

Here's a piece of advice to the overworked executive: Take short vacations during weekends, preferably far away from your place of work.

A two-day vacation not only recharges you, it may even help you develop brilliant ideas.

Bright ideas are more likely to come to you in a relaxed atmosphere than during a tension-filled day at the office.

***

The President's expression changed from jovial to one of irritation.

"That's against the law, Joel," the President shot back.

***

So unlike her predecessor, this GMA.

During his watch, Erap had all the impounded luxury cars at the customs bureau assigned to him on MR basis. These luxury vehicles were seized because their importation was prohibited or their owners couldn't pay the high taxes and duties on them.

Erap then gave the luxury cars to his Cabinet members, cronies and relatives. The cars were returned to the customs bureau following a public furor.

JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

LABOR DAY QUIET

The streets teemed with Labor Day marchers, but this worker stayed away from it all as he took his fate philosophically to share with his son the tranquility of the bay off the unfinished boardwalk at the Rizal Park in Manila.

Anti-graft group presses attack on 'flawed' deal

By Alcuin Papa

AN ANTI-CORRUPTION group on Monday urged the Office of the Solicitor General (OSG) to clarify the Supreme Court's decision upholding the controversial $350-million Jancom garbage deal.

The non-government organization Bantay Kontrata pressed its attack on Jancom through a letter sent to Solicitor General Simeon Marcelo and Assistant Solicitor General Carlos Ortega dated April 29.

The group reminded the OSG that the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority has already requested the solicitor general to "file a Motion for Clarification, or other appropriate pleadings, to the Supreme Court in relation to the Jancom case."

But according to the group, Assistant Solicitor General Ortega "has refused to file the necessary Motion for Clarification as requested by the MMDA."

Bantay Kontrata also said the "flawed" decision of the lower courts on the Jancom deal was merely upheld by the Supreme Court's 3rd Division, "without acting on our Motion for Intervention."

And since President Macapagal-Arroyo already announced that she would not sign the Jancom contract because it was flawed, "it is therefore of paramount urgency that the Office of the Solicitor General file the appropriate pleading before the Supreme Court to untangle the twisted decision of the 3rd Division," the group said in the letter.

The group said the OSG must file the proper motion within the period prescribed by law, which is 15 days from receipt of the Supreme Court decision, or not later than May 3.

A copy of the letter was furnished President Macapagal, Justice Secretary Hernando Perez, and MMDA Chair Benjamin Abalos Jr.

Bantay Kontrata and other groups have objected to the garbage deal, saying negotiations were attended with anomalies and irregularities. They also claimed the contract would defraud government of P390 billion.

Jancom officials later explained that the total project cost would only amount to $390 million.

The contract was signed during the term of President Fidel Ramos in 1997. It was later endorsed to then incoming president Joseph Estrada.

At some point, Jancom hauled the MMDA to court to compel the government agency to honor the contract.

At the moment, the MMDA is said to be negotiating with Jancom on a possible "compromise agreement" to resolve the issue, despite objections from environmental groups.

Cop killed in Sta. Cruz robbery

SPO1 FERNANDO Garcia, 43, answered the call of duty Tuesday night and tried to arrest two robbers. Unfortunately, it cost him his life.

Garcia, of the Western Police District Station 3 in Plaza Miranda, was shot dead by unidentified men in Sta. Cruz, Manila, said detective Benito Cabatbat of the Western Police District's homicide section. Garcia was riding a pedicab on his way to Harem Videoke and KTV on Claro M. Recto Avenue in Sta. Cruz, to follow up an estafa case when he chanced upon a robbery in progress on Evangelista Street.

Garcia saw two men stealing the valuables of bar employee Allan Aglibot and cashier Joy Reyes in front of a disco at around 5:30 a.m. Tuesday, Cabatbat said.

One of the suspects was armed with a 9-mm handgun and was described to be about 30 years old, 5-foot-5, with brown skin and slant eyes. The other suspect was said to be about 25 years old, 5-foot-6, and with fair complexion, Cabatbat said.

While still inside the pedicab, Garcia introduced himself as a policeman, Cabatbat said. This prompted one of the robbers to shoot Garcia.

The victim struggled to get off the cab and managed to walk several meters before slumping on the pavement. The suspects then took Garcia's service pistol and fled, Cabatbat said.

Fire victims rebuild homes in Mandaluyong

MANDALUYONG City Mayor Benjamin Abalos Jr. has launched a citywide Bayanihan program to help the victims of the Welfareville Compound fire that rendered 1,500 families homeless last week.

The program aims to help the victims rebuild their homes at a very affordable cost. Patterned after the internationally renowned Habitat International, the program run by common folks would help victims rebuild the communities destroyed by the fire.

"What is beautiful here is that it is the fire victims themselves who would build their own house from the materials provided by the cooperatives while the city government would provide the land where their homes would be built. But of course the land would be paid for by the beneficiaries since it is illegal for the government to give lands freely," Abalos said.

About 500 shanties were gutted by the fire that hit the Welfareville Compound in Barangay Addition Hills, a densely populated slum community in Mandaluyong City.

Damage was placed at P10 million. ***Nelson Flores***

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, May 2, 2002
5th Week of Easter

1st Reading: **Acts 15:7-21**
Gospel: **Jn 15:9-11**

Jesus said to his disciples, "As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; remain in my love. You will remain in my love if you keep my commandments, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and remain in his love.

I have told you all this, that my own joy may be in you and your joy may be complete."

Commentary

Jesus felt drawn to spend whole nights in prayer, or to get up early, long before dawn, and go out to a lonely place where he could be alone with God. What was Jesus finding there? In the stories of Jesus' baptism and transfiguration, we hear the voice from heaven: "You are my Son, the beloved." "As the Father has loved me so I have loved you," says Jesus in today's gospel. From observation of Jesus' love of us, we may surmise the Father's love for him. He weeps over Jerusalem, longing to gather her children together. He washes our feet: "He had always loved those who were his own in the world. Now he showed how perfect.his love was." When arrested, he said, "Let these others go free." As we pray with today's gospel, let's marvel that Jesus was sent to let us share fully in God's joy.

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QC mayor, aides charged

By Agnes E. Donato

QUEZON City officials including Mayor Feliciano "Sonny" Belmonte were charged with usurpation of judicial function after they allegedly ordered the illegal demolition of a commercial building on Quezon Avenue last April.

But Mayor Belmonte on Tuesday said he neither knew about the demolition nor heard about the filing of the case against him.

"Frankly, I don't know about that," Belmonte told the INQUIRER. "The city administrator's office must have ordered the demolition."

"That's how it is for a mayor," he said half-jokingly in Filipino of his involvement in the suit.

Businessman Manuel Santos, executive director of Treasureland Group of Companies, filed the charges against the city officials.

Also named as respondents were Robert Nacienceno, QC assistant city administrator; Joselito Cabungcal, engineering department officer-in-charge, Marlowe Jacutin and Romeo Espino, Copriss Task Force; and Robert dela Cruz of the City Hall Police Detachment.

Santos held the officials responsible for the illegal demolition of the P3-million, two-story structure on Quezon Avenue corner Edsa on April 24.

Santos said Treasureland owned the building, and the title was under the name of Eddie Gil, chair of the corporation.

Santos refuted City Hall's reported claim that the structure did not have a building permit, prompting building officials to order its demolition.

BELMONTE

Flores de Mayo

ARTIST Lydia Velasco masterfully decorates her voluptuous women with sensual flowers in her show Flores de Mayo which opens tonight at the West Gallery of the SM Megamall, Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong City. The exhibit runs until May 14.

'THE DEEP END'

Mom tries to save thankless son

By Emmie G. Velarde

REVIEW

WHAT WOULD a mother do for her child? Everything, including covering up a crime the child has, or may have, committed.

In "The Deep End," Margaret Hall, an upright middle-class mom, wakes up one fine morning to find a man's body in the backyard of her quiet lakeside property. She is rattled—not a condition she's familiar with, being the very "together" sort—because she knew the dead man.

Wait, it gets better.

The man was her gay son's lover whom she asked only yesterday to please stay away. And she's sure her son was out last night in the boathouse, a few meters from the spot of her horrific discovery. Holy saints of self-sacrificing moms, what to do now? She can forego the daily jog, but she has breakfast to prepare, yesterday's laundry to fold, chit-chat with the father-in-law . . . thank goodness, it's the neighbor's turn at car pool for the school kids!

Hubby's away in a tanker on the high seas so she can't reach him and, incidentally, he doesn't know their son is gay. Yes, their precious, beautiful son, who is just one more audition away from a music scholarship, and who has absolutely everything to lose. Believe it or not, the son's name is Beau.

Real story

Margaret thinks all these out (except the son's name) for about three seconds, and makes a decision. With super-natural strength chanced upon only by people trying to salvage heavy furniture from a raging fire, she lifts dead lover into a launch and heads for the literal deep end of the lake, where she dumps the body.

Back at home minutes later, everybody has missed mom, except the clueless gay son, who proceeds to deal her a few cutting remarks when she asks about his black eye. Ah, such are many sons, gay or not, of even the most dutiful mothers.

Then the real story starts. Right after police fish out the body from the lake, a brooding man with a strange accent shows up at Margaret's door, bearing a video tape of Beau and the late lover, in very compromising positions indeed. The man says his boss wants $50,000 in 24 hours, or the tape goes where she'd really hate it to go.

To get this far has taken half the movie's running time; the rest follows the countdown to payoff, paved with little random jolts that make up for the initial sluggishness.

Thinking in close-up

Scottish actress Tilda Swinton says of her character: "She's a woman who's thinking her way through a crisis, usually in close-up, with nobody to talk to. Forced to take responsibility, she does reckless things."

Swinton has a face so neutral and so malleable, it has been molded with excellent results into a few diverse onscreen characters, each one making a lasting impression. For example, the iron-fisted leader of the hippie community in "The Beach," and the CEO of the cryogenics company in "Vanilla Sky."

All the performers were handpicked by indie filmmakers Scott McGehee and David Siegel, who would not be moved from their choices, even if it meant raising their own production money, so that they might proceed "without regard for box-office concerns." Swinton was singled out to play the resolute mom, and Croatian actor Goran Visnjic (from the TV series "ER") the brooding and peculiarly compassionate blackmailer.

SWINTON

The material recalls "Before and Aftér" (1996), starring Meryl Streep and Liam Neeson as a couple who tamper with murder evidence that incriminate their teenage son. However, McGehee and Siegel say they have been inspired by Max Ophul's noir, "The Reckless Moment." Ophul's source, in turn, was Elizabeth Sanxay Holding's 1947 mystery "The Blank Wall," which appears in the credits.

Water everywhere

Transposing and contemporizing elements, and also because water was essential to their concept, the filmmaking partners from San Francisco have moved the location to Lake Tahoe and changed the novel's daughter into a gay teenage son who associates with some sleazy characters in nearby Reno.

And so there's water, and more water at every turn—dripping from a faucet, contained in the Halls' 25-gallon aquarium, the lake enveloping the chilly environ—as though to wash away every lump in the throat and chest that threatens to obstruct Margaret's thinking process. Her calm countenance belies the gathering undercurrent visible to no one but her tormentor. She is a complex woman with a mean maternal streak, and the blackmailer, scolded like a little boy at a crucial point, ends up seeking her approval.

No, really.

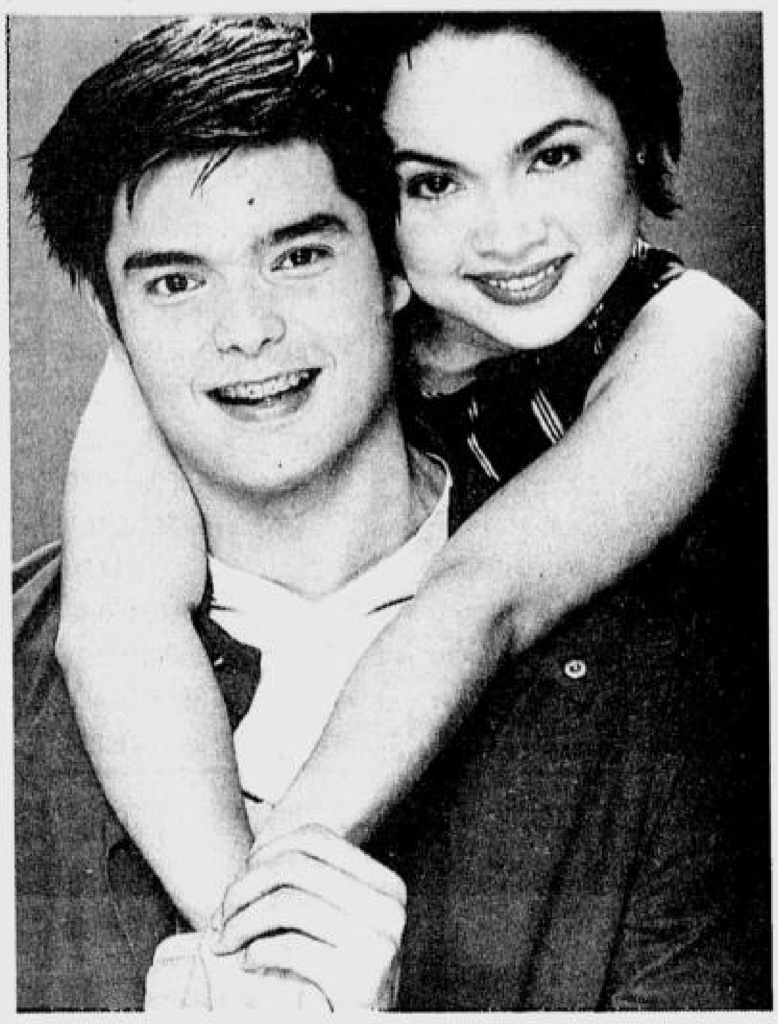
Plus, in one scene, Visnjic as the reluctant opportunist looks around Margaret's home and notes the almost finicky tidiness. With softened eyes that say, "What a wonderful place to go home to after 48 hours straight on ER duty," he decides that it will be extremely rude to disturb his victim's orderly family life. After all, the supreme goal of every Croat—next only to the end of war and hard times in the homeland—is order, family and life in one package.

Warning

McGehee and Siegel have done well once again with "The Deep End" (their first project was a more eccentric thriller titled "Suture"). It was the biggest sale in Sundance last year, the duo's possible speedboat to mainstream Hollywood, whose waters they have treaded for a decade. It shouldn't take too long now for their names to ring a bell for film buffs worldwide.

My only misgiving about "The Deep End" is that it appears the darn son will never know exactly what havoc he has wrought.

Warning to mothers of thankless kids (whatever gender): Don't do a Margaret unless there's a director in the immediate vicinity who can yell "Cut!" when the next reasonable move that presents itself is for you to grab your wayward offspring by the hair and throw him/her into the lake. Make that Lake Placid, and I don't refer to Tilda Swinton's face.



FIRST TIME. Judy Ann Santos and Dingdong Dantes

Aiza's newest hit inspires Dingdong-Judy Ann romance

VIVA Films pulls off a casting coup in "Akala Mo," the first movie team-up of drama princess Judy Ann Santos and Dingdong Dantes that hits theaters on May 22.

"Akala Mo" is inspired by the newest single of multi-platinum hitmaker Aiza Seguerra. The single from Aiza's second album is also the theme song of the movie.

The light comedy-drama is based on a story and screenplay by Melissa del Rosario and is directed by Lyle Sacris. It features Judy Ann as Rizette, a security guard who falls deeply in love with Eric (Dingdong), one of the tenants of the building she's guarding.

Rizette belongs to a family of security guards: Her mother (Elizabeth Oropesa) fell in love with her father while they were guarding a cemetery.

Rizette's whole world revolves around Eric, who, unfortunately, does not feel the same way about her. She tries her best to get his attention, like playing a special song each time he passes by, or paying him more attention than the other tenants, but nothing works.

One day, she saves him from being injured in an accident and in the process, she herself gets injured. Eric volunteers to shoulder her hospital expenses, and that's when they start to become close. Things turn sour when Eric fails to make good on his promise to attend the wedding of Rizette's friend Beauty (Candy Pangilinan). Upset, Rizette asks to be reassigned to another post and to the night shift so she can study during the day.

She throws away everything that reminds her of him, including her diary. But he finds the thrown-away things, starts to read the diary, and is shocked to discover how she really feels about him.

The young couple somehow ends up in the same cemetery where her parents met, and they live happily ever after.

Bonding in Boracay

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

SINCE it's the month of Mother's Day, I thought of sharing with you some of the lessons I learned from my Kids, **Bianchi** and **Ice**.

I'm sure most moms will agree that when nothing else makes sense, just talking to our kids helps clear our heads. Mothers know best alright but there are times our kids know better because they see things in a simple and pure way.

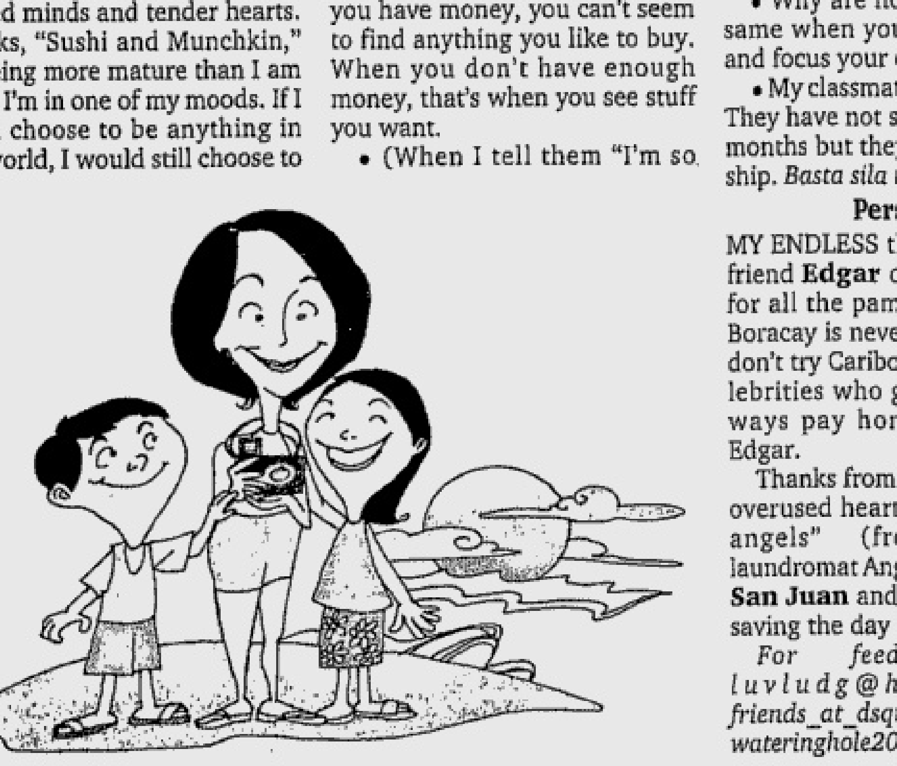
My aunt says "I'm an unusual mom, maybe because I don't hide anything from my kids. I never pretend to be superwoman to them. They have seen me cry, go crazy, burst with joy, get mad as a dog, etc. I share with them the whole gamut of emotions so that vicariously they will know how to handle it when it's their turn."

Being a single mom in show biz is one hell of a balancing act. Celebrity kids are exposed to all kinds of scandals and intrigues. As much as we want to shield our children from controversies, we can't keep them in a cocoon away from all the prying eyes and rumormongers. Why detach them too much from reality?

I remember when I wasn't allowed to call my mom "mommy" in public because it would be detrimental to her career. That was during the height of her show biz "love triangle" with **German Moreno** and the late **Ike Lozada**. My mom and I always have a good laugh looking back at those tacky days when their love team was even complete with a matching doll. And even the doll had a fans club of its own!

But one day my tongue slipped and I called her "Ate Mommy." End of the love team illusion.

Bianchi, Ice and I had a chance to bond in Boracay for three blissful days. Now more than ever, I appreciate the words of wisdom I've picked up from their unadulterated minds and tender hearts. Thanks, "Sushi and Munchkin," for being more mature than I am when I'm in one of my moods. If I could choose to be anything in this world, I would still choose to be your mother.



Here are some nuggets of wisdom from the mouth of babes.

- Why are you crying over him? Is he crying over you?
- If it's heavy, put it down.
- If it has no more flavor, spit it out.
- (When I'm lighting a candle and after several attempts, it still does not light) Don't force it, Ma. There's no more spark in the relationship.
- (When I asked Ice, when he was 6, why he prefered Riddler instead of the more popular Batman) Why buy something everybody has? Be different! When you have money, you can't seem to find anything you like to buy. When you don't have enough money, that's when you see stuff you want.
- (When I tell them "I'm so harrassed!") Whatever you are doing, you might as well enjoy it.
- (When missed to take pictures of Boracay sunrise) The best moments go unphotographed.
- (While swimming) Don't struggle! Just lie down, close your eyes and you will float. We are one with nature. Even when we're just standing here in the water, the movement of the water changes directions.
- (When I reprimanded Ice for jumping on to the banana boat without a life vest and the speedboat driver wasn't looking) I just wanted to know what it felt like.
- Why are no two sunsets the same when you really sit down and focus your eyes on it?
- My classmate has a girlfriend. They have not seen each other in months but they have a relationship. *Basta sila talaga.*

Personal

MY ENDLESS thanks to my dear friend **Edgar** of Caribo Boracay for all the pampering. A trip to Boracay is never complete if you don't try Caribo's specialties. Celebrities who go to Boracay always pay homage to lovable Edgar.

Thanks from the bottom of my overused heart to my "guardian angels" (from my fave laundromat Angel Wash), **Emma San Juan** and **Cora Buena** for saving the day for me.

For feedback, e-mail luvludg@hotmail.com, friends_at_dsquare@yahoo.com, wateringhole2000@yahoo.com

Mossimo . . .

From page A28

Elaine Suizo, and Linda Maria Beehler.

They paraded in another set of Mossimo bikinis in different, island-inspired colors in keeping with the contest's theme, "Unity in Diversity—the World's Colors in Boracay." They also showed off Mossimo's new line of bags, Mossimo AXS.

Receiving special awards were Maceda and Castillo, Mr. & Ms Personality, chosen by the Pearl of the Pacific; Tanhueco, Ms Eskinol Girl; Mendez, Mr. Master Facial Cleanser; Bingcang, Ms Block and White; Gabby Torrente and Castillo, Mr. & Ms Photogenic, chosen by official contest photographer Roy Nabong; Ngo and Santilla, Mr. & Ms Physique, chosen by The Pearl Manila Hotel; Randolf Stamatelaky and Tanhueco, Internet Choice Award, tabulated by Compass Internet through a voting poll; and Hermogenes, the Congeniality Award.

The show was witnessed by a big crowd from Boracay and Manila. It will be telecast on May 27, 10:30 p.m. on ABC-5.

The event was directed by Duds Santiago for stage and Calvin Neria for TV. For details and TV sponsorship, call Cast & Crew at 718-1032 or log on to www.mossimobikinisummit.compass.com.ph.

Jason returns in 'Friday the 13th' sequel

LEXA Doig stars in "Jason X."

IT'S FRIDAY the 13th again and Jason Voorhees returns to the screen after a nine-year absence in the 10th installment of the classic Friday the 13th film series (the first film was released in 1980).

Director Jim Isaac, who has an extensive background working in special effects, had been looking for an original angle to update the character of Jason, while still retaining the visceral thrills that fans of the series have come to expect.

Isaac approached series creator Sean Cunningham, with whom he had previously collaborated. As it turns out, Cunningham was also imagining fresh and exciting ways to reinvent the character.

The two filmmakers, with producer Noel Cunningham and screenwriter Todd Farmer, arranged for a spirited brainstorming session where a variety of ideas were tossed around.

As Cunningham remembers, "We spent hours talking about what we liked about the Friday the 13th movies and what we thought would make it better and different. 'Jason in Space' was one of the ideas that came up. We all looked at each other and said, 'Hey now, this one could be pretty interesting.'"

According to Isaac, "We all left the meeting with this crazy sci-fi idea about a bunch of kids in the near future on an archeological field trip to a dead planet—Old Earth -- which has been devastated by global warming. The students dig up a bunch of trinkets and end up discovering a frozen Jason and taking him back to their spacecraft, where all hell breaks loose."

Cunningham added, "We all had the same vision for the movie which made it easy to go forward with because we all liked the concept—a good scary, fun, funny, sexy, action-horror movie set in a place where no one can hear you scream.

"Sean and I had known Jim Isaac for about 12 years and with his background on doing special effects, he was the perfect person to direct 'Jason X.' It's a very effects-heavy film, so Jim's expertise was really important. He really has a feel for the material."

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HELP! I'M A FISH - GP 12:00, 1:50, 3:45, 5:40, 7:35, 9:30	SHOWTIME - P 13 1:05, 3:15, 5:25, 7:35, 9:45	I AM SAM - GP 1:30, 4:20, 7:10, 10:00

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10	S2PID LUV
11	VIDEOKE KING
12	BUKANG BIBIG

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1	I AM SAM
2	SCORPION KING
3	BUKANG BIBIG
4	VIDEOKE KING
5	VIDEOKE KING
6	RETURN TO NEVERLAND
7	SCORPION KING
8	ROLLERBALL
9	CLOSED
10	CLOSED
11	CLOSED
12	CLOSED

SM SOUTHMALL
8066988

1	RETURN TO NEVERLAND
2	SCORPION KING
3	BLADE 2
4	VIDEOKE KING
5	S2PID LUV
6	I AM SAM
7	VIDEOKE KING
8	SCORPION KING
9	ROLLERBALL
10	BUKANG BIBIG

SM CITY CEBU
2313876

1	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
2	HART'S WAR
3	BLADE 2
4	TIME MACHINE
5	S2PID LUV
6	MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
7	VIDEOKE KING
8	SCORPION KING

SM CITY ILOILO
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2	CLOSED
3	TIME MACHINE
4	BLADE 2
5	VIDEOKE KING
6	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
7	CLOSED
8	SCORPION KING

SM CITY PAMPANGA
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1	SHOWTIME
2	SCORPION KING
3	SNOW DOGS
4	S2PID LUV
5	DEEP END
6	VIDEOKE KING

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1	SCORPION KING
2	RETURN TO NEVERLAND
3	VIDEOKE KING
4	S2PID LUV

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1	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
2	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
3	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
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1	S2PID LUV
2	SCORPION KING
3	BUKANG BIBIG
4	VIDEOKE KING

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1	SCORPION KING
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6	TIME MACHINE

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ALABANG
Live Action Show and Meet & Greet Schedules
May 5, 6 & 7 - 11:00am, 3:30pm & 6:30pm
Town Plaza

CEBU
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4 GOLD (DTS)	SCORPION KING
5 GOLD (DOLBY)	I AM SAM
6 GOLD (SDDS)	SNOW DOGS
7 GOLD (DOLBY)	RETURN TO NEVERLAND
8	VIDEOKE KING
9	VIDEOKE KING
10	BLADE 2

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4	
5	
6 (DTS)	
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2	SCORPION KING
3	BUKANG BIBIG

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2	SCORPION KING
3	I AM SAM
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5	BUKANG BIBIG

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1	VIDEOKE KING
2	MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
3	VIDEOKE KING
4	BUKANG BIBIG
5	SCORPION KING
6	DEVIL'S MASK
7	
8	

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3 (DTS)	SCORPION KING

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2 (DTS)	VIDEOKE KING
3 (DOLBY)	SCORPION KING
4	SHOWTIME

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1	VIDEOKE KING
2 (DOLBY)	SHOWTIME
3 (DTS)	SCORPION KING
4	RETURN TO NEVERLAND

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
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1	VIDEOKE KING
2	SCORPION KING
3	SOON TO OPEN
4	SOON TO OPEN

Cinema 2000 MetroTown
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1	VIDEOKE KING
2	ICE AGE
3 (DOLBY)	SCORPION KING
4 (DTS)	TIME MACHINE

Lianas Cinema
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1 (SDDS)	RESERVE
2	BUKANG BIBIG
3	HINOG SA PILIT
4 (DTS)	VIDEOKE KING

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1 (DOLBY)	SCORPION KING
2	VIDEOKE KING
3 (DTS)	HART'S WAR
4	MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
5	DEVIL'S MASK

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	VIDEOKE KING
2	SCORPION KING
3	MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249-2558

1	SCORPION KING
2	VIDEOKE KING
3	MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel (046) 413.0311

1	
2	
3	MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736

1	
2	
3	

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS)	MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
2 (DTS)	SCORPION KING

Fourstep
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385

1	

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	S2PID LUV
2	VIDEOKE KING
3	SCORPION KING

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	SCORPION KING
2	MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
3	HART'S WAR
4	VIDEOKE KING

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	DEEP END
2	S2PID LUV
3 (DTS)	SCORPION KING
4	SHOWTIME

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4	I AM SAM
5	VIDEOKE KING
6	ROLLERBALL
7	RETURN TO NEVERLAND
8	COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO
9	SNOW DOGS
10	SHOWTIME

Ermita
536 -7809- 12

1	SCORPION KING
2	BLADE 2
3	SHOWTIME
4	HELP! I AM A FISH
5	VIDEOKE KING
6	RETURN TO NEVERLAND
7	I AM SAM

Metro East -
Marcos hway 682- 8193 / 8280

1	I AM SAM
2	SHOWTIME
3	SCORPION KING
4	RETURN TO NEVERLAND
5	SNOW DOGS
6	VIDEOKE KING
7	ROLLERBALL
8	BLADE 2

Novaliches
935- 3229 - 30

1	RETURN TO NEVERLAND
2	ROLLER BALL
3	I AM SAM
4	SCORPION KING
5	VIDEOKE KING
6	E.T.
7	RUSH HOURS
8	IKAW LANG HANGGANG NGAYON

Imus
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2	RETURN TO NEVERLAND
3	BUKANG BIBIG
4	CROSSROADS
5	VIDEOKE KING
6	VIDEOKE KING

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2	CROSSROADS
3	TIME MACHINE
4	ICE AGE
5	S2PID LUV
6	GOOD ADVICE

Iloilo
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2	BLADE 2
3	VIDEOKE KING
4	TIME MACHINE
5	HART'S WAR
6	COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO

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1	VIDEOKE KING
2	SCORPION KING
3	DEEP END
4	COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO
5	SHOWTIME
6	SCORPION KING

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VALDEZ

CAYABYAB

Basil and Ryan reunite onstage at Captain's Bar

THEIR collaboration spans more than two decades and extends even offstage. Two of the respected artists in the music industry who also happen to be very good friends—Basil Valdez and Ryan Cayabyab—are back for another exhilarating night of music.

Share an inspiring evening with Basil and Ryan in "Crossover Presents," tonight at Captain's Bar of Mandarin Oriental Manila. The show is the monthly concert series of 105.1 Crossover.

Basil and Ryan will be joined onstage by top session musicians such as Mel Villena on saxophone, Bobby Taylo on bass, Cesar Aguas on guitar, Roy Mercado on drums. Musical director is Gerard Salonga.

The Opera and comedian Jon Santos will open the show.

Basil will render favorite Crossover classics, plus his signature OPM hits.

For inquiries, call Captain's Bar at 750-8888 or Ticket World at 891-5610.

SOUTH BORDER AT VIRGIN CAFÉ
South Border takes centerstage on all Thursday nights of May at Virgin Café Tomas Morato. The band will keep music lovers and party people up all night grooving to the hits of today and reminiscing their signature songs like "Kahit Kailan," "Love of My Life" and "Habang Atin ang Gabi." For inquiries, call 373-4030 or 926-8039.

Another potential hit for Marc Velasco

BALLADEER Marc Velasco, the five-foot-something singer behind the hit single "Ordinary Song," has not lost his touch. He recently released a new single "Soul Mates," which is another potential hit.

Marc has paid his dues. Mass acclaim was not necessarily in the itinerary, but it came. He hopped from one music job to another, from doing Led Zeppelin covers to playing in a gyrating samba trio, rewriting and arranging for "Anak" superstar Freddie Aguilar.

Marc has now settled with singing folk songs. In these times of rap, rock, double-meaning novelty singers and repetitive R&B, Marc trusts his lucidly warm folk will worm its way through and refuse to age.

After earning a gold record for his album debut, Marc casts a winning bid on his second single.

The Zamboanga-bred singer also composed, played guitar and brainstormed on arrangement and production for the new single.

Producer Perf de Castro courageously did alternative perspective on Marc's sound.

The album contains other cuts like Irving Lisondra's "Thinking of You" and "Though I Love You," Gary Granada's "Iisa," the accordion-laden "Maria" written by Eric Enrile and the Chabacano cut, "Si Ta Ama."

De Castro's courage to do alternate perspectives on Marc Velasco sound, such as a lifting jazz take on Lisondra's "Thinking of You," full-band setups on Joey Bunquin's "Way To Your Heart" and his own sanguine "Araw at Ulan."

VELASCO

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101	
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	S2PID LUV
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	SCORPION KING
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	ROLLERBALL
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	SCORPION KING
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	RETURN TO NEVERLAND
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	DEVIL'S MASK
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	I AM SAM
FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)	MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)	SCORPION KING
FIESTA CARNIVAL	
NEW FRONTIER	
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	TIKIM / GIRLS
ODEON	VIDEOKE KING
ODEON-2	SCORPION KING
ROBEN	BUKANG BIBIG
TANDEM-1	ITLOG
TANDEM-2	IKA-7 GLORYA
TIMES	BEHIND ENEMY LINES / SUPREME SUNCTIONS
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	ORIGINAL SIN
QUEZON-1	BUKANG BIBIG
REMAR	VIDEOKE KING
REMAR-2	BUKANG BIBIG
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	VIDEOKE KING
B	BUKANG BIBIG
C	SCORPION KING
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	I AM SAM
CINEMA-2	RETURN TO NEVERLAND
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	IKA-7 GLORYA
CINEMA-2	VIDEOKE KING
CINEMA-3	MASARAP BA ANG BAWAL
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	BUKANG BIBIG
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	E.T.
CINEMA-6	VIDEOKE KING
CINEMA-7	COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO
CINEMA-8	S2PID LUV
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	SCORPION KING
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	SCORPION KING
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	ROLLERBALL
CINEMA-12	RETURN TO NEVERLAND
CINEMA-14	I AM SAM
CINEMA-15	VIDEOKE KING
LORES	
CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	SNOW DOGS
CINEMA-2	SCORPION KING
CINEMA-3	RETURN TO NEVERLAND
CINEMA-4	HELP I'M A FISH
CINEMA-5	SHOWTIME
CINEMA-6	I AM SAM
UNIWIDE METROMALL	
(LAS PIÑAS)	
CINEMA-1	
CINEMA-2	
CINEMA-4	
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARAÑAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
CINEMA-2	THE OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
CINEMA-4	ALAMID

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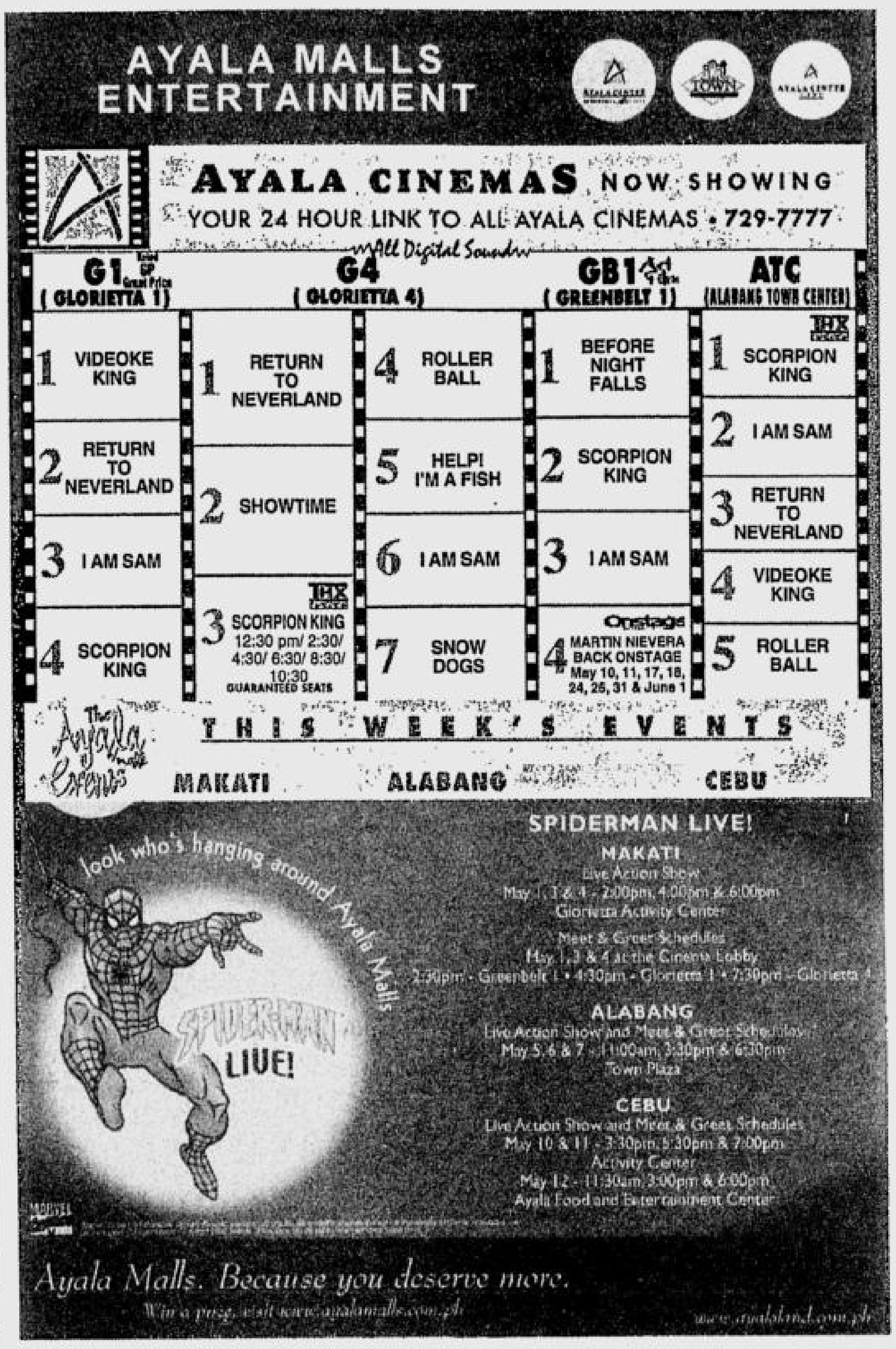

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4 SCORPION KING

G4 (GLORIETTA 4)
1 RETURN TO NEVERLAND
2 SHOWTIME
3 SCORPION KING 12:30 pm/ 2:30/ 4:30/ 6:30/ 8:30/ 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS
4 ROLLER BALL
5 HELP! I'M A FISH
6 I AM SAM
7 SNOW DOGS

GB1 (GREENBELT 1)
1 BEFORE NIGHT FALLS
2 SCORPION KING
3 I AM SAM
4 Onstage MARTIN NIEVERA BACK ONSTAGE May 10, 11, 17, 18, 24, 25, 31 & June 1

ATC (ALABANG TOWN CENTER)
1 SCORPION KING
2 I AM SAM
3 RETURN TO NEVERLAND
4 VIDEOKE KING
5 ROLLER BALL

THIS WEEK'S EVENTS
MAKATI ALABANG CEBU

SPIDERMAN LIVE!
MAKATI
Live Action Show
May 1, 3 & 4 - 2:00pm, 4:00pm & 6:00pm
Glorietta Activity Center
Meet & Greet Schedules
May 1, 3 & 4 at the Cinema Lobby
2:30pm - Greenbelt 1 • 4:30pm - Glorietta 1 • 7:30pm - Glorietta 4
ALABANG
Live Action Show and Meet & Greet Schedules
May 5, 6 & 7 - 11:00am, 3:30pm & 6:30pm
Town Plaza
CEBU
Live Action Show and Meet & Greet Schedules
May 10 & 11 - 3:30pm, 5:30pm & 7:00pm
Activity Center
May 12 - 11:30am, 3:00pm & 6:00pm
Ayala Food and Entertainment Center

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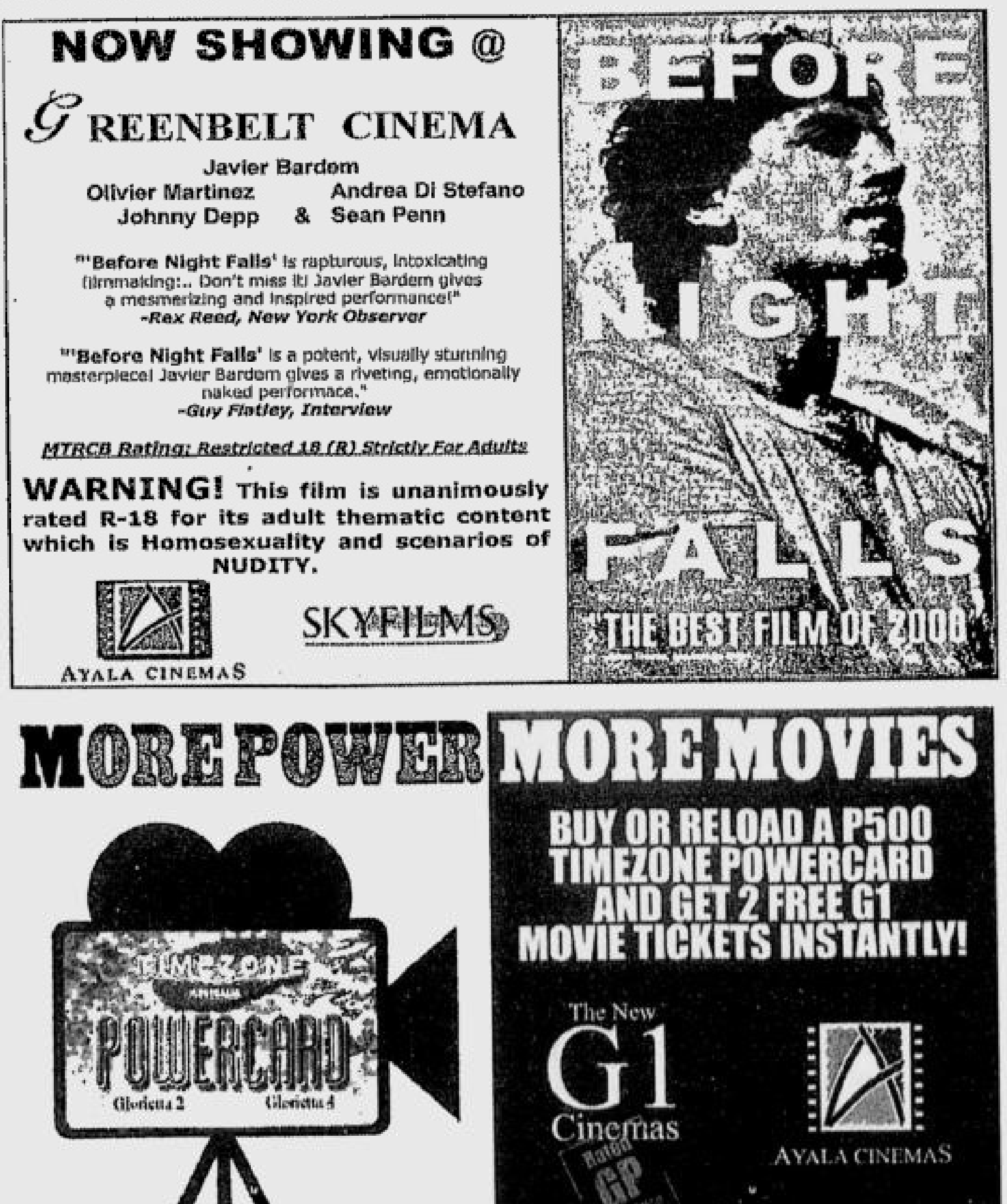

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Javier Bardem
Olivier Martinez Andrea Di Stefano
Johnny Depp & Sean Penn

"'Before Night Falls' is rapturous, intoxicating filmmaking:.. Don't miss it! Javier Bardem gives a mesmerizing and inspired performance!"
-Rex Reed, New York Observer

"'Before Night Falls' is a potent, visually stunning masterpiece! Javier Bardem gives a riveting, emotionally naked performace."
-Guy Flatley, Interview

MTRCB Rating: Restricted 18 (R) Strictly For Adults

WARNING! This film is unanimously rated R-18 for its adult thematic content which is Homosexuality and scenarios of NUDITY.

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ENTERTAINMENT

Editor **Louie C. Camino**

Lack of training and coordination

VIEWFINDE

Nestor U. Torre

A RECENT telecast of the new Sunday game show, "Txtrs 5," envinced some kinks that the program should quickly iron out before it ends its limited run some five weeks from now.

The two teams' showing was hampered by their lack of training in the texting game being played. Team members made many texting errors that drastically reduced the money they earned.

A lot of time was used up unproductively by contestants stomping on the wrong pad, hitting it too many times, or not waiting until the hi-tech contraption implemented their stomped instructions.

To aggravate the situation, too many people were shouting out instructions that rattled the contestants and added to the mistakes they made. Clearly, each team has to decide on only one person calling the shots, or else bedlam will ensue, as it did last Sunday.

Due to the lack of training and coordination, the "winning" team went home with only P120,000, which the members had to divide between the five of them. Less than P25,000 in individual winnings is poor recompense for such a hectic and stressful gaming-texting experience.

Once they qualify, teams should rehearse much more outside the studio, preferably on a mock-up of the texting set. Only after they refine their gaming and texting systems and get their act together should they compete for real on "Txtrs 5."

Boob-tube booboos and quick-show errors

HOST: I hear you're in love again?

Guest: I admit!

Host: So soon after your last failed relationship?

Guest: Well, why not? We're all born to love. It's humanistic!

(Ay, humanistic!)

* * *

Host: Do you have anything to say to your new love? Why don't you tell her?

Guest: I just want to say, I hope she will love me my way I love her, too!

(Duh.)

* * *

Host: What's the latest on the recent rash of bombings?

Cohost: More and more, it's becoming clear that one of the groups maybe behind in the bombings is the MILF.

(*Ano daw?*)

* * *

Host: Your singing career is doing so well this year! What's up next for you?

Guest: I'm coming in my first album.

(Don't say that—please!)

* * *

Host: How did you spend your weekend?

Co-host: I went to a beautiful resort.

Host: What did you do there?

Co-host: For once, nothing. It was wonderfully peaceful to meditate the surrounding there!

(Ah, so . . .)

* * *

Quizmaster: *Ano ang araw ng pagkamatay ni Kristo?*

Contestant: Christmas!

(Go to the back of the class!)

* * *

Quizmaster: Who was the queen of *kundiman* and *sarsuela* who was the wife of Amado V. Hernandez?

Contestant: Sylvia la Torre!

(No, Atang de la Rama!)

* * *

Quizmaster: *Anong gulay ang kinakain ni* Bugs Bunny?

Contestant: Orange!

(Not *kulay, gulay*. Not orange, carrot!)

* * *

Quizmaster: Who is the author of "Interview with a Vampire"?

Contestant: Victor Hugo!

(No, Ann Rice.)

* * *

Movies on Cinemax

SATURDAY, May 11 at 6 a.m., "Running on Empty." At 8 a.m., "Cinema Secrets II, Ep. 6: When in Rome." 6:30 p.m., "The Screaming Room: The 10 Scariest Films Ever Made, Part 1." 5:30 a.m., "Cinema Secrets II, Ep. 8: High Wired."

Sunday, May 12 at 1:30 p.m., "Cinema Secrets II, Ep. 7: Crash Course." 2 p.m., "Being John Malkovich." 5:15 p.m., "James Dean."

New episodes

NEW episodes of "Courage, the Cowardly Dog" premiere on the Cartoon Network starting May 3 every Friday at 7 p.m. Courage is, ironically, an incredibly timid, easily frightened dog who must defend the lives of the old, retired couple he lives with.

Paranormal events threaten the security and stability of their home, as they keep getting visited by denizens of "the other side." The cartoon series is based on the 1996 Academy Award-nominated short, "The Chicken from Outer Space."

BEACH BODIES. (From left) First runners-up Edilyn Santillan and Jordan Hermogenes, champions Ritchie Bingcang and Carlo Maceda, and second runners-up April Tanhueco and Douglas Robinson.

Mossimo beauty and brawn contest ends in Boracay

"MIRROR, mirror, on the wall," goes the fairy tale line, "who's the fairest of them all?"

It was no fairy tale and there was no need for a magic mirror for the Mossimo Bikini Summit, held at the Pearl of the Pacific Resort in Boracay last April 20. There was instead a panel of judges, which decided that the fairest bodies belonged to Carlo Maceda and Ritchie Bingcang, who bested 22 other contestants in the popular summer event.

First runners-up were Jordan Hermogenes, who was the biggest crowd favorite among the male contestants, and Edilyn Santillan. Second runners-up were Douglas Robinson and April Tanhueco.

The crowd agreed with the judges that Ritchie was the hands-down top winner among the young women.

The finals night opened with a pulse-pounding, rousing production number where the 24 candidates wore fabulous beaded bikinis with matching accessories by Edwin Uy, the pageant's featured fashion designer. The costumes, the stage design and the lighting lent the finals night a Mardi Gras carnival feel.

The competition proper was divided into three segments. The first was Oriental-inspired, with the candidates parading in cheongsam bikinis. The second segment had an ethnic theme, and the candidates wore African-inspired bikinis with matching accessories by Uy. Standouts in this segment were Amerasian candidates Linda Beehler and Danica Murphy who looked like real African princesses.

The final competition segment took on a stylish European air as the candidates paraded in skimpy black bikinis by Mossimo, dressed up with black leather belts, wristbands and other accessories.

After the three segments, hosts Nina Ricci Alagao, Manny Distor and Geoffrey Briz announced the 12 semi-finalists: Carlo Maceda, Jordan Hermogenes, Douglas Robinson, Denny Ngo, Edward Mendez, and Mark Hernandez; and Ritchie Bingcang, Edilyn Santillan, April Tanhueco, Josephine Castillo,

BORACAY/ A25

Aga and Charlene on corned beef and loving gestures

SHOW BIZ couple Aga Muhlach and Charlene Gonzalez. Enviable marriage.

AGA Muhlach and Charlene Gonzalez star in yet another Argentina Corned Beef television commercial. This time around, viewers will see how loving gestures like sharing a special meal and spending quality moments together can solve little arguments.

"Communication is very important in a marriage," says Charlene. "You have to take time to know what bothers your partner, and you have to talk things through, because it's a sign that you care."

Aga adds: "It's also important that you respect your partner and know when you can compromise on things."

During the filming of the commercial, fans and crew looked on in admiration as Aga and Charlene openly showed affection for each other. During filming breaks, they held hands, embraced or exchanged light kisses. Aga would also fool around and make funny faces while Charlene prepared with make-up artist Fanny Serrano.

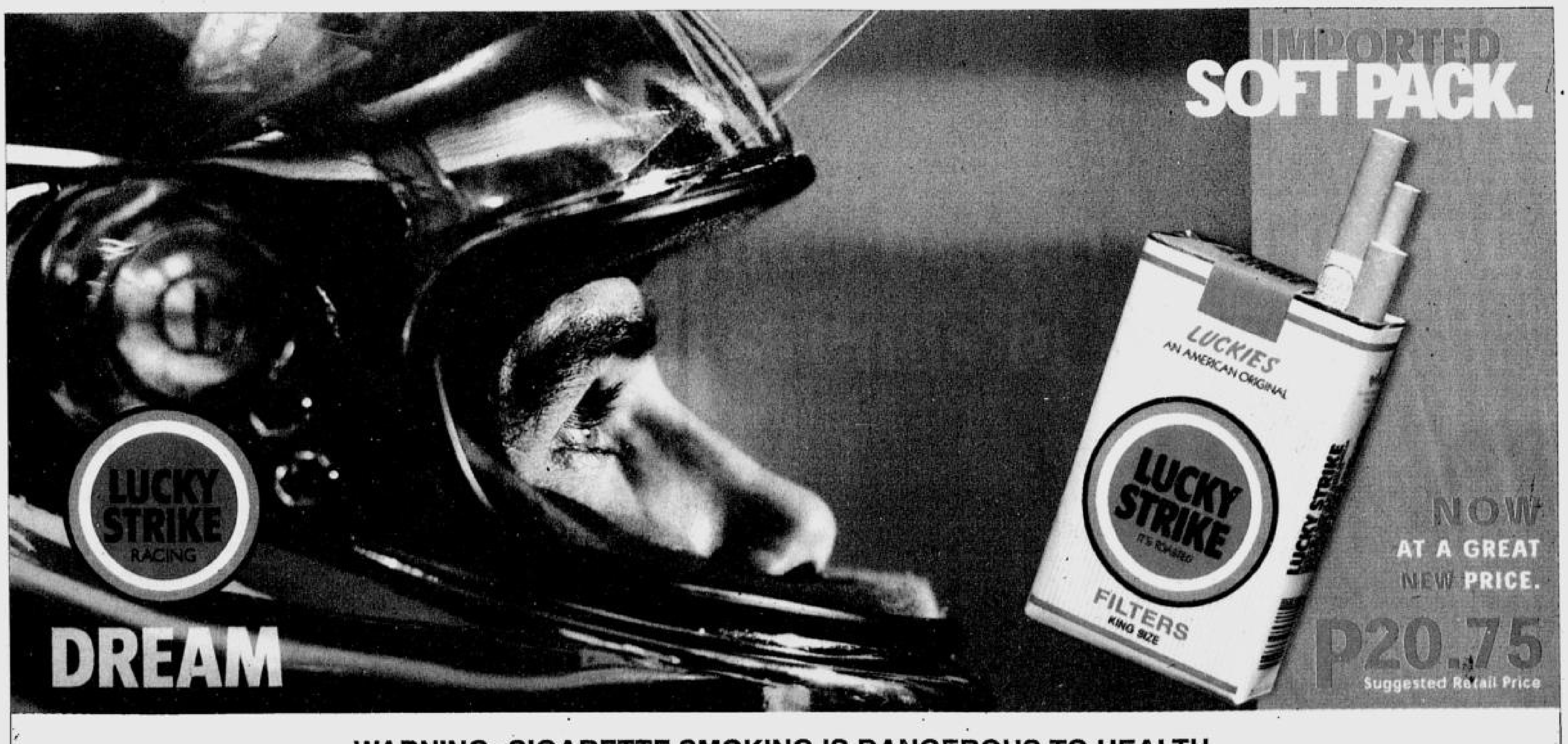
This display of obvious adoration for each other makes the couple's commercials tick. Says Charlene, "Aga is a very romantic person. He takes time off to really spend quality time with me and the kids."

Aga and Charlene took a breather from the shoot when Mommy Elvie, Charlene's mother, arrived with the couple's babies. Everyone rushed for a look at the twins, who didn't mind all the attention. Aga picked up Andres and proudly showed how he's a hands-on dad.

Charlene has even gone to proclaim that she would have married earlier "if I knew it was going to be as wonderful as this."

Aga also credits his marriage for giving his life direction. "Now that I'm married," he shares, "everything has become somewhat stable."

As the crew wrapped up the filming, Aga and Charlene watched the result on TV. Everyone on the set agreed: The commercial manages to give a hint on why the young couple's marriage is enviable.



WARNING: CIGARETTE SMOKING IS DANGEROUS TO HEALTH.

BUSINESS

Editor **Raul O. Marcelo** Assistant Editor **Corrie S. Narisma**

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Bourse for electricity trade to open this year

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE WHOLESALE electricity spot market—an exchange to buy and sell electricity supply not covered by contracts between producers and distributors—is expected to start operating before the year ends.

Energy Secretary Vincent Perez Jr. said during a visit to the INQUIRER that an autonomous group market operator (AGMO) could be named by the fourth quarter.

"The AGMO would operate for a year after which an independent market operator would take over," Perez explained.

He said the spot market would pave the way for a fully deregulated electricity supply sector.

"Generators and distributors would be involved in very competitive trading in the (wholesale spot market)," Perez said. "We expect power rates to go down because of this."

He added that when franchise areas of existing distributors have been opened to other suppliers in 2004, customers would have the choice of where to buy electricity.

"At the start of open access, consumers within a contiguous area and who have a monthly consumption average of a megawatt can opt to buy electricity from other suppliers," Perez said.

He said that homeowners in a subdivision in Metro Manila, for example, could buy electricity from a supplier other than Meralco.

He added that the new supplier, called an aggregator, could choose the cheapest supply in the wholesale spot market and then pay a wheeling charge to Meralco for the use of its power lines in delivering electricity.

"The 1-mw minimum consumption level would later go down to 750 kilowatts and probably even lower depending on how the market develops," Perez said.

The energy department has prepared the draft rules for the electricity spot market and is currently studying proposed software platforms for the exchange.

Perez earlier said the software would be chosen in time with the completion of the wholesale electricity spot market rules.

The official noted that setting up the exchange was a condition for the sale of National Power Corp.'s generating assets.

Under the Electric Power Industry Reform Act, the energy department shall form the body that will operate the exchange.

With equal representation among industry players, the National Transmission Corp. will at first administer the AGMO before the private sector takes over.

PEREZ

RP auditing practices need overhaul—WB

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE WORLD Bank has expressed concern over poor accounting and auditing practices in the Philippines and the regulators' lax handling of big-time debacles that had victimized the investing public in the past.

A development policy review recently released by the bank said that while the statutory codes for the country's accounting and auditing standards were basically sound, problems were cropping out at the level of implementation and enforcement.

The bank, one of the country's biggest donors of development loans, noted there was "little capacity" to enforce accounting guidelines and disclosure guidelines.

"Penalties for poor conduct of audits by independent auditors and the mechanism for imposing them is weak," it said.

"In spite of the many well-known cases of poor quality audited financial statements that caused losses for investors, the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants (Picpa) have not publicly sanctioned any auditor in the past," it noted.

While the report did not specify these cases, among the infamous auditing cases that had shaken the confidence of investors and creditors in the past involved publicly listed companies. For instance, the fraudulent booking of assets by Victorias Milling Co. was uncovered when it filed for debt moratorium at the SEC. Pilipino Telephone Corp., on the other hand, caused jitters in the banking system when it was found to have understated its liabilities by billions of pesos.The World Bank lamented that auditors in the Philippines could choose from a wide range of disclosure style and reporting standards, such as local generally accepted accounting principles (Gaap), International Accounting Standards or US Gaap. Many companies prepare different financial statements for different end-users, it said.

As such, the bank supported the bold reforms contained in a recent report on the observance of standards and codes on accountancy, which included, among others, the adoption of the International Accounting Standards without modification.

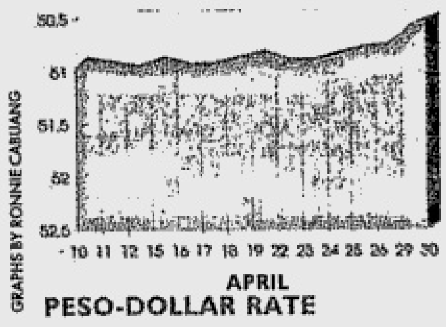
The new international accounting and auditing standards are scheduled for implementation

RP/ B5

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO - DOLLAR



PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱50.54 = $1

As of 5 p.m.; April 30, 2002

¥127.96 = $1

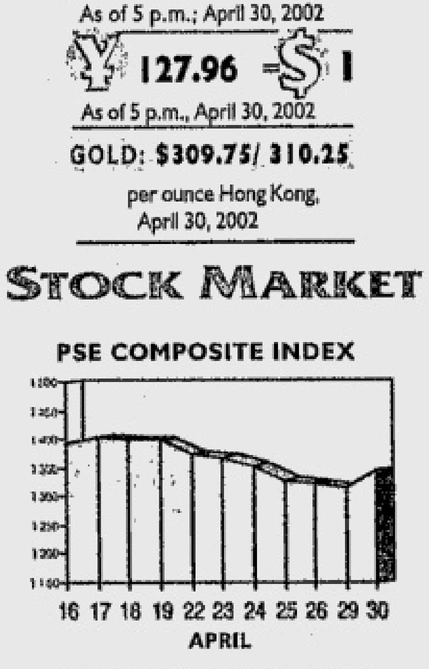
As of 5 p.m., April 30, 2002

GOLD: $309.75/ 310.25

per ounce Hong Kong,
April 30, 2002

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

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Jollibee's ₱1.66-B project gets incentives from BOI

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE BOARD of Investments has granted fiscal perks to Philippine fast-food giant Jollibee Foods Corp.'s P1.66-billion food processing plant in Laguna that could serve up to 700 stores here and abroad.

Jollibee, which currently has more than 400 stores in the Philippines and overseas, currently maintains two commissaries—in Pasig City and in Mandaue City, Cebu—which produce 67 tons of Jollibee products a day or, as the company claimed, enough to feed a nation.

The Pasig Commissary services all of Luzon (including Metro Manila) while the plant in Cebu supplies the Jollibee outlets throughout the Visayas and Mindanao.

Based on the application of Jollibee's wholly owned subsidiary, Zenith Foods Corp., the food processing facility in Carmelray Industrial Park in Canlubang is expected to churn out annually 15,925 metric tons of processed meat; 169 metric tons of processed marine products; 1,058 metric tons of processed fruits; 5,486 metric tons of cereal, and 12,493 metric tons of sauce and mixes.

The facility, which is expected to generate 397 new jobs, will be built alongside a proposed logistics and distribution center. The plant will start operations in March 2003.

The commissary is at the heart of the Jollibee's quick-service operations because it is where most of the firm's items are produced, prepared and stored. The Laguna plant is part of the company's realignment as it strives to sustain its fast-paced growth in a matured market.

Two years ago, Jollibee put up four autonomous Regional Business Units (RBU)—Mega Manila, North Luzon, South Luzon and Visayas-Mindanao—to enable it to manage more effectively its fast-growing operations, which includes Greenwich Pizza Corp., Chowking Foods Corp. and Delifrance.

ACTION WITHIN 24 HOURS

Bayantel to give rebates for delayed service

By Abigail L. Ho

LOPEZ-OWNED Bayan Telecommunications Inc. assured its subscribers that it would respond to service-related problems within 24 hours or a P100 rebate would be given each day of delay.

Th guarantee program is part of the telecommunications firm's P1.5-billion capital expenditure for the year, earmarked to support various marketing programs and strategic projects.

"Our service guarantee is one way we want to communicate to our subscribers and the general public that we have a new Bayantel that is even better. To prove it, we will even pay rebates if we fail to solve the trouble within 24 hours," Bayantel assistant vice president for corporate communications Michael Cervantes said.

The telecommunications firm would pay its residential and business subscribers P100 rebate for each day that restoration or repair is delayed.

A subscriber could get a rebate of as much as his monthly recurring rate plus the foreign currency adjustment of that month per Bayantel line.

"With this guarantee, we want our subscribers to know we are definitely serious in ensuring their customer satisfaction," Bayantel senior consultant for customer care Dave Rogers added.

Bayantel's 24-hour guarantee is offered in all of the company's franchise areas in Quezon City, Manila, Malabon, Valenzuela, Navotas, Bicol, Tacloban, Davao City, General Santos City and Agusan.

To report any service trouble, subscribers may get in touch with Bayantel's customer service representatives through hotlines in Metro Manila (412-1212), Davao City (300-1212), General Santos City (301-1212), Bicol and Eastern Visayas (171) and Agusan (341-1212 or 171).

This service is part of the Lopez-owned firm's efforts to improve its service to subscribers, responding to numerous complaints it has gotten in the past for slow response and bad service, specially during power outages when Bayantel lines go down with the power.

i-Vantage unit outlines foreign expansion plan

JUPITER Systems Inc., the software subsidiary of publicly listed i-Vantage Corp., plans to take advantage of the rebound in the global economy this year with an offshore expansion focused on the United States, China, Thailand and Indonesia.

The penetration of these four new markets is expected to help the company attain a 35-percent increase in net profit this year from less than P2 million posted in 2001, JSI president Fermin Taruc said, noting that each new market should pump in about $500,000 in additional revenue this year.

JSI, which is being groomed by technology holding firm i-Vantage for an initial public offering in a foreign stock exchange, raked in P90 million in total revenues in 2001, more than double the P40 million recorded in the previous year.

In a statement, Taruc said the strategy was geared toward making its flagship product ERIC (Enterprise Resource Information and Control system) a global brand.

"In the 15 years of JSI's existence, we have become a market leader in the Philippines and have already made some significant inroads in markets abroad, particularly in Indonesia. We will leverage this track record and experience to ensure that we achieve the same degree of success in these new markets," Taruc explained.

ERIC is an enterprise resource planning software that integrates key areas of the enterprise and enables users to respond to ever-increasing changes in customer and supply environments. It covers financial, distribution, manufacturing and personnel functions.

The expansion in the Asian markets will primarily be through strategic partnerships with local companies.

"Nevertheless, we are not precluding the possibility of setting up direct subsidiaries where and when the size and demands of a market justify. This is the direction we are taking for the US market," Taruc said.

"As we make ERIC a global brand, the consistent message across countries is that ERIC is used globally but works locally," Taruc said. "Key to our offshore expansion strategy is the development of standard localized versions of ERIC for each major market," he said.

He said JSI would release within this year fully translated local versions of ERIC for China, Thailand and Indonesia. While the core product incorporates globally accepted best practices that will remain present in each version, each localized product takes into account uniquely local requirements such as language and financial and tax reporting, he added.

He said these three Asian markets were identified as the entry points for JSI's regional expansion this year because these were among the fastest growing economies, specially China which is expected to grow by 24 percent each year.

Meanwhile, JSI had established a US office last March, although initial activities were initially devoted to market assessment and business requirements analysis. The soft US market entry strategy is designed to enable JSI to "make more informed decisions when it pursues more aggressive marketing efforts for the US toward the last quarter of 2002," Taruc stressed.

Taruc said JSI was continuing to improve its fundamentals even as it was heavily focused on market expansion specially in view of its eventual listing in an offshore technology-heavy bourse for better valuations and a bigger investor base.

JSI currently serves 300 companies in the Philippines and some 40 companies abroad. About half of its client base comes from the manufacturing, telecommunication and agriculture sectors.

Creditors to own 70% of PT&T

MAJORITY owners of Philippine Telegraph and Telephone Co. would be giving control of 70 percent of the company to its foreign and local creditors when it converts half of its P8.5-billion debt into equity.

The debt-to-equity swap is part of the master restructuring agreement that the company would soon sign with its 35 creditors, according to PT&T president and chief executive Jose Luis Santiago.

He said the creditors would be meeting to discuss the final draft of the master restructuring agreement, which is now in the documentation stage.

"The final matter to be tackled is the date of final signing. We're now basically in a go situation," he said in an interview.

The 70-percent stake would be spread out among the company's creditors composed of equipment suppliers, foreign and local banks and some other financial institutions.

Korean telecommunications giant Korea Telecom has the biggest exposure among all the creditors followed by ECI Telecom of Israel, the Chase consortium and a number of foreign and local banks, Santiago said.

On the other hand, the balance that would not be converted into equity would be made payable over 10 years, including a five-year grace period.

The interest rate is placed at an "affordable rate" based on the 91-day treasury bill plus a 3-percentage point spread for the peso loans and the London interbank offered rate (Libor) plus a 2-percentage point spread for the dollar loans.

Converting its debt into equity would help bring its debt-to-equity ratio to 1:1 from a high of almost 3:1 in fiscal year 2000.

This ratio would give the company better leverage to borrow funds to finance future expansion efforts, PT&T parent firm Republic Telecommunications Holdings Inc. executive vice president Ricardo Ysmael said.

"The creditors themselves being our own partners would be a plus to attract additional funds," he added.

He explained that, for four years, PT&T had been operating on internally generated cash as a moratorium on borrowing was put in place.

Aside from giving the company better financial leverage, the finalization of the debt restructuring agreement would reduce by half its interest expenses, giving it a better shot at improving its bottom line.

Retelcom owns 70 percent of PT&T while 30 percent is held by individual shareholders.

Metro Pacific considers union with affiliate

By Doris C. Dumlao

BLEEDING property developer Metro Pacific Corp. is considering the possibility of consolidating itself with either Fort Bonifacio Development Co. or Bonifacio Land Co. to make P2 billion worth of debts eligible for equity conversion.

In a recent briefing, MPC chief finance officer Jose Ma. Lim said the company's most preferred route to ease the burden of about P18 billion in consolidated debts was to sell property assets to the creditors.

However, he admitted that not all banks were amenable to such debt-for-property swaps (dacion en pago), due to concerns over rising real-and-other-properties-owned-or-acquired (ropoa) levels.

"The next thing you'll do is to try them to convert into equity. In some cases, the bank has the ability to take these into their equity portfolio particularly if there's a plan for them to get out—whether that would be merging of FBDC with MPC or BLC with MPC," Lim said.

"These are ideas that are being discussed freely but we've not made up our mind on how the exit is going to work. But it's an option for close to a third of local debt," Lim said, noting that about P2 billion of the local debts of parent firm MPC was secured by BLC shares.

FBDC, developer of the 150-hectare Fort Bonifacio Global City, is a joint venture with state-controlled Bases Conversion Development Authority while BLC is a 69.6-percent owned holding firm that has a majority stake in FBDC.

As both FBDC and BLC were unlisted companies, MPC knows it will be difficult to convince creditors to accept shares in exchange for debts without a clear-cut exit mechanism. Another option open to MPC, Lim said, is to list FBDC on the stock exchange, similar to the spin-off route (via Highlands Prime Inc.) taken by leisure estate Belle Corp. to raise fresh funds for debt reduction.

Of MPC's P18 billion in debts relating to its Fort Bonifacio interests, P12 billion is owed by MPC itself and secured by BLC debts while the rest represents direct borrowings of either FBDC or BLC. Of MPC's P12 billion in debts, P7 billion consists of local debts while the rest are debts to Hong Kong-based parent firm First Pacific Co. Ltd.

MPC has about 18 creditor-banks. Among the biggest are Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co. and the Social Security System with exposures of P2 billion and P1.5 billion.

"Failing either a reduction in sales or conversion into equity, the next best thing is to stretch out residual debt by strengthening the position of creditors, securing unsecured debts with assets," Lim said.

He explained that the MPC group had about P4 billion worth of unsecured debts (P3.5 billion for MPC and P500 million for FBDC) which could be covered by various assets, including its big landbank outside of the Fort Bonifacio Global City.

Lim said he expected half of MPC's local debts to be resolved by any of the combination of these schemes by June this year.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Tuesday, April 30, 2002)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	5	5	5	5	7,000
Banco Filipino Sav & Mort	90	90	90	90	200
Bank of the Phil. Islands	68	69	67.5	69	639,500
Citystate Savings Bank	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	34.5	37.5	34.5	37.5	653,400
Global Business Bank Inc.	72	72	72	72	100
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	37.5	39	37	39	651,300
Philippine National Bank	54	54	53	53	17,500
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	12	12	12	12	6,000
Security Bank Corp.	18	18.25	18	18.25	1,500
Union Bank of the Phil.	21.75	22.5	21.5	21.5	42,800
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.38	1.38	1.38	1.38	40,000
Filipino Fund Inc.	0.42	0.49	0.4	0.4	110,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1385	1400	1385	1400	3,430
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	30,000
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1070	1075	1070	1070	23,850
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	29	30.5	29	29.5	29,700
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.59	0.59	0.57	0.58	1,540,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	640	645	640	645	36,310
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.041	0.042	0.041	0.042	3,100,000
Piltel	0.45	0.47	0.45	0.46	1,000,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	450	465	450	460	352,200
Ivantage Corp.	0.42	0.48	0.42	0.48	130,000
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.019	0.019	0.018	0.019	19,900,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	23.5	25	23.5	25	573,000
Manila Electric Co. B	37	39.5	37	39	3,399,200
Petron Corp.	1.54	1.66	1.54	1.66	4,527,000
Salcon Power Corp.	1.72	1.76	1.72	1.76	1,006,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.87	0.87	0.87	0.87	20,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.75	2.9	2.75	2.9	3,581,000
William, Gothong & Aboitiz	1.92	1.92	1.88	1.88	60,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Alsons Cement Corp.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	10,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	600,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.8	3,000
Sanitary Wares Mfg. Corp.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	100,000
Union Cement Corp.	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	70,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	10,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	13.75	14.5	13.75	14	1,835,500
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	30.5	31	30.5	30.5	473,500
RFM Corp.	1.26	1.3	1.26	1.3	130,000
San Miguel Corp. A	49	50	49	50	641,700
San Miguel Corp. B	58	58	57.5	58	263,500
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.43	0.43	0.43	0.43	30,000
Ayala Corp.	5.7	5.9	5.7	5.9	6,311,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.08	2.08	2.06	2.06	70,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.46	0.49	0.46	0.49	2,350,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0095	0.0095	0.009	0.0095	46,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.75	2.8	2.75	2.8	11,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs.	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	10,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.59	0.63	0.59	0.61	7,680,000
A Brown Company Inc.	0.46	0.46	0.46	0.46	40,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	100,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.055	0.055	0.05	0.05	6,800,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	20,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	6.5	6.5	6	6	36,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	27	28.5	27	27.5	273,400
Global Equities Inc.	0.105	0.105	0.105	0.105	590,000
Ionics Inc.	7	7.1	7	7	581,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.76	1.76	1.76	1.76	30,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. A	0.018	0.018	0.018	0.018	400,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.82	0.83	0.82	0.83	3,810,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	500,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.7	0.7	0.65	0.7	90,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	670,000
Music Corp.	0.28	0.28	0.27	0.27	200,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.34	0.35	0.34	0.34	460,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.1	0.105	0.1	0.105	800,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.26	0.26	110,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Interphil Labs Inc. B	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	170,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	80,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	400,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	10,800
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.53	0.54	0.53	0.54	910,000
Grand Plaza Hotel Corp.	11	12	11	12	4,200
Manila Jockey Club	13	13	13	13	4,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	27.5	30	27.5	29	1,157,100
DMCI Holdings Inc.-Pref.	775	775	775	775	1,020
Equitable PCI Bank-War	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	30,000
Globe Telecom Hldg. (Pdr)	745	750	730	750	6,010
Jollibee Warrants	13.25	13.5	13.25	13.5	36,500
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0002	0.0002	0.0002	0.0002	50,000,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series R	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	2,100
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,200
Philweb.Com Inc.-Warrants	0.0048	0.0048	0.0046	0.0046	7,000,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6.7	7	6.7	7	14,583,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.25	0.26	0.25	0.26	1,040,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.38	0.4	0.38	0.38	1,550,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.26	0.27	0.26	0.27	1,390,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.7	2.75	2.65	2.7	22,153,000
Highlands Prime Leisure	2.06	2.08	2.06	2.08	900,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.32	0.34	0.32	0.34	230,000
SM Development Corp.	1.04	1.1	1.04	1.1	105,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.9	6	5.7	5.9	14,886,000
MINING					
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	1.5	1.52	1.5	1.5	49,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines Inc.	0.042	0.042	0.041	0.041	11,000,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	50,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	7,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.004	0.004	0.004	0.004	5,000,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	200,000
OIL					
Interport Res. B	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	4,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.004	0.004	0.004	0.004	15,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.004	0.004	0.004	0.004	14,000,000
South China Resources Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	60,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	500,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	2,228,580	125,668,175.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	181,178,140	540,337,925.00
PRO	56,837,000	251,114,720.00
Mining	23,299,000	588,500.00
OIL	33,560,000	211,400.00
GRAND TOTALS:	297,102,720	917,920,720.00

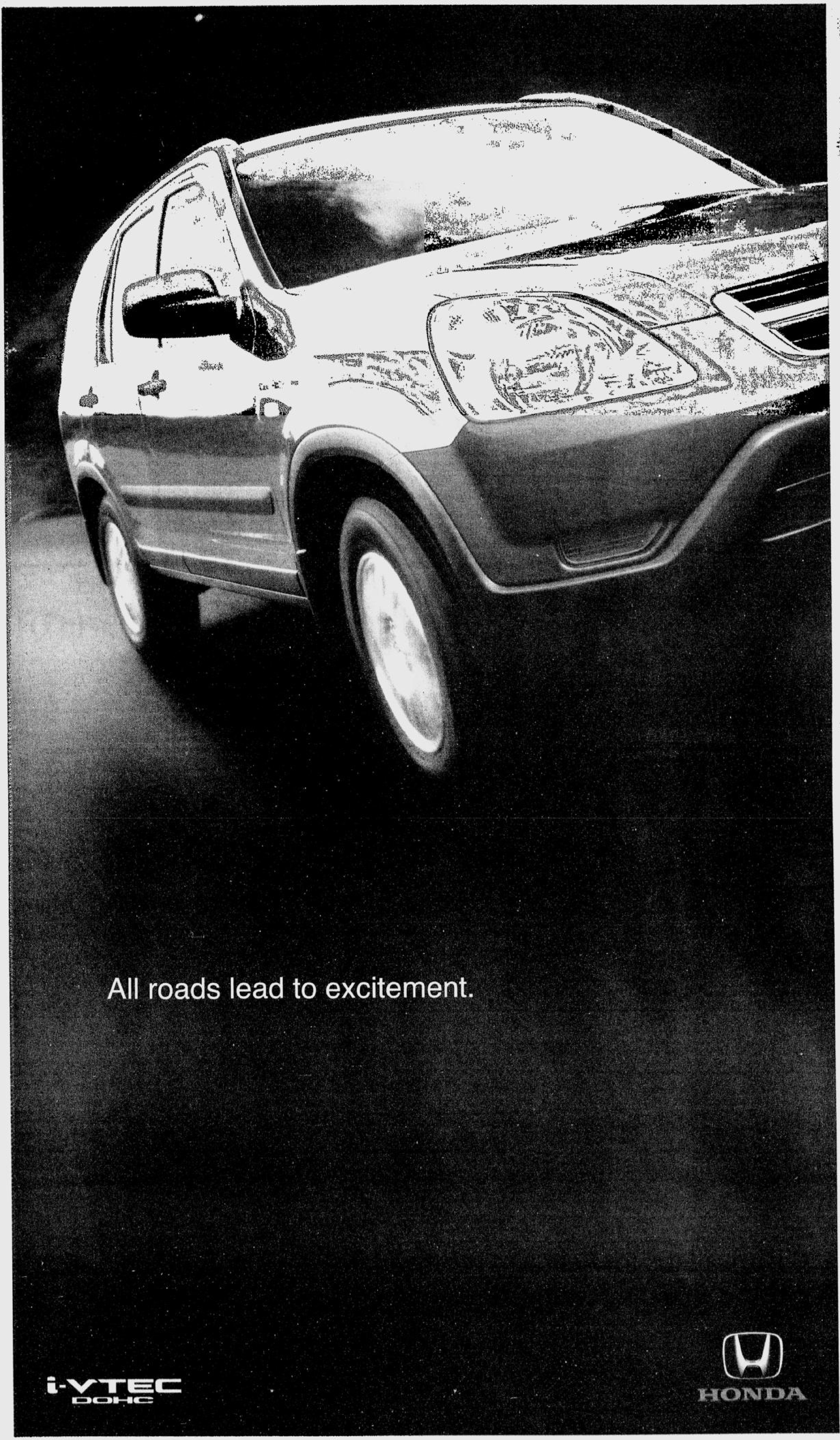
AVERAGES

Banks & Fin Svc	556.27	UP 11.44
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,814.92	UP 37.57
PRO	596.43	UP 18.03
Mining	1,332.06	DOWN 7.69
OIL	1.35	UP 0.01
All Shares Index	746.92	UP 10.12
Composite	1,346.09	UP 31.08

NO. OF ADVANCES: 47; NO. OF DECLINES: 21; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 38; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 106; NO. OF TRADES: 3,285

CURRENCIES

April 30, 2002 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.106072	1.000000	50.7440
Japan	Yen	0.008636	0.007808	0.3962
United Kingdom	Pound	1.614644	1.459800	74.0761
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.141824	0.128223	6.5065
Switzerland	Franc	0.683267	0.617742	31.3467
Canada	Dollar	0.706079	0.638366	32.3932
Singapore	Dollar	0.611935	0.553250	28.0741
Australia	Dollar	0.594662	0.537634	27.2817
Bahrain	Dinar	2.934035	2.652661	134.6066
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.294945	0.266660	13.5314
Brunei	Dollar	0.611596	0.552944	28.0586
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000118	0.000107	0.0054
Thailand	Baht	0.025603	0.023148	1.1746
UAE	Dirham	0.301144	0.272264	13.8158
Korea	Won	0.000862	0.000779	0.0395
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.904100	45.8777
Brazil	Real	0.467684	0.422833	21.4562
Denmark	Kroner	0.134509	0.121610	6.1710
India	Rupee	0.022615	0.020446	1.0375
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.291110	0.263193	13.3555
Mexico	New Peso	0.118132	0.106803	5.4196
New Zealand	Dollar	0.493650	0.446309	22.6475
Norway	Kroner	0.131864	0.119218	6.0496
Pakistan	Rupee	0.018480	0.016708	0.8478
South Africa	Rand	0.104981	0.094913	4.8163
Sweden	Kroner	0.108338	0.097948	4.9703
Syria	Pound	0.025138	0.022727	1.1533
Taiwan	NT Dollar	0.031940	0.028877	1.4653
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.001316	0.001190	0.0604


All roads lead to excitement.
i-VTEC
DOHC
HONDA

Gov't presses PAL to honor ₱2-B put option deal

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE NATIONAL government and the four government financial institutions holding minority stakes in Philippine Airlines are preparing a consolidated demand letter pressing the country's flag carrier to honor a P2-billion put option agreement.

At the same time, the government and the four GFIs are asking the Office of the Solicitor General to be ready with the next course of action that the government can take in case PAL fails to honor the deal. In this case, the OSG may have to go after PAL's guarantors such as Fortune Tobacco and Asia Brewery, in behalf of the government and the GFIs.

The put option agreement, signed on April 1996, requires taipan Lucio Tan to buy at P5 per share the state's remaining shares in PAL within six years ending May 6 this year, However, a source said the government was willing to give Tan another one month to honor the deal.

In exchange for this deal, the government and the GFIs waived their pre-emptive rights to a capital call that was aimed at raising P3.4 billion for the company's refleeting program.

Earlier, the government and the four GFIs said they would exercise the put option over a combined 3.8-percent stake in PAL. Philippine National Bank also holds a 46-percent stake in PAL but it decided to put on hold any action related to its holdings.

PAL, however, insisted that the agreement had provided that the put option was to be exercised only if the airline was in good financial health. The carrier's par value is now down to P1 and its book value is at 33 centavos per share.

ONE of Philippine Airlines Inc.'s aircraft. The flag carrier is being forced to honor its part of the bargain.

The national government accounts for 0.96 percent of the remaining 4.26 percent combined state interests in the airline. The four GFIs pressing PAL to buy their shares are the Government Service Insurance System with 1.37 percent stake, the Land Bank of the Philippines, 0.69 percent, the Development Bank of the Phils. and the AFP-Retirement Service Benefits System with 0.31 percent.

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho, in an earlier interview, stressed that the government would press PAL to honor the deal saying it would be advantageous to the state and its companies to have their shares in PAL sold to Tan at this point in time.

However, PAL is citing it current financial condition as a reason to skirt the deal, sources said.

PAL is expecting some P1.6 billion to P1.8 billion in losses this fiscal year starting March. The amount is lower than the expected net loss of P2.7 billion during the previous year's operations ending February. Buying the government's shares at P5 is expected to compound its financial woes.

"It is reasonable for us to exercise the put option particularly now that PAL's share price is less than P5 because the GFIs also have to protect their respective financial interests," said Camacho.

The DBP and Land Bank said they would exercise the put option. PNB, for its part, said it might consider waiving the option as it supported PAL's position that its weak finances would prevent it from honoring the deal.

Camacho said the purpose of having guarantors was to have someone assume the responsibilities of PAL to the government and GFIs in case the airline failed to meet its obligations.

Lucio Tan owns 53.79 percent of PAL and the three companies controlled by the taipan account for 35.15 percent. PAL employees own 2.61 percent of the airline while other private groups hold the remaining 4.19 percent.

In 1999, the flag carrier required a fresh $200-million infusion that was put up by the Tan group through Top Wealth enterprise, Maxell Holdings and Richmark Holdings.

Making democracy work in RP

By Dr. Victor S. Limlingan

COMMENTARY

TODAY, capitalism reigns supreme. Its great anti-thesis, communism, has been swept into the dustbin of history. The supreme irony in this is that communism as an ideology appealed to the higher impulses of men. The economic underpinning of communism is that each person must selflessly contribute to the economy all his talents while responsibly getting from the economy only what he needs. Or as stated in their slogan, "From each according to his abilities and to each according to his needs."

In sharp contrast, the economic underpinning of capitalism is self-interest. Adam Smith argued that as men pursued their self-interest, an invisible hand would somehow direct them to work for the common good, or as proudly proclaimed in the film "Wall Street," "Greed is good."

In short, greed beat good will.

While capitalism rules triumphantly in Asia, democracy, its political twin, has been wanting in followers. In fact, while almost all the countries in Asia concede that capitalism is key to development, almost all argue that democracy is a hindrance to development.

As their prime evidence that democracy is a hindrance to development, these advocates of authoritarianism frequently cite the Philippines where democracy is at its most robust and development is at its most niggardly.

Not a hindrance

We argue that democracy is not a hindrance to development. It simply has not worked so well in the Philippines. The point is not to discard it but to make it work.

When the American Founding Fathers met in Philadelphia to craft the framework by which their democracy would work, they—all men of goodwill—did not premise the success of democracy on men's goodwill. As Thomas Jefferson observed, "Our democracy will best be safeguarded, not by men's goodwill but by their ambition."

This meant that they deliberately set up a political system of "check and balance." The three equally powerful branches of government led by men of ambition would check and balance each other. Thus did the American Founding Fathers determine the rules of engagement by which men of ambition would do what men of goodwill yearn for.

We would argue that the primary reason why democracy has not worked in the Philippines is that we insist that democracy must work based on men's goodwill. We find such premise to be tenuous. This is not to argue that the Philippines lack men of good will. For goodwill was shown in great abundance in Edsa I and II. But apparently goodwill can be summoned only in times of crisis and is not sustainable in ordinary times. For ordinary times, ambition must be harnessed in the service of democracy.

And for ambition to be harnessed, we must first make ambition respectable. Consider greed. Investors, both domestic and foreign can, with utter candor and aplomb, demand that government adopt public policies and erect public infrastructure to satisfy their private greed, i.e., attract their investment by promising high returns. Political ambition must be made as respectable as business greed. We consider such undertaking to be so broad as to be dealt with separately. But agreeing on the rules of political engagement in the forthcoming political summit would be a good start.

Respectable ambition

Once ambition has been made respectable, we must make sure that it is harnessed for the public good. For example, the American and the British models sought to lodge the power to tax and the power of the purse in that branch of the government that is most in touch with the people, the House of Commons in Britain and the House of Representatives in the United States. The legislators drawn from the people and drawing their power and position from the people would be the vigilant guardian of their interest.

Such is the theory. But practice runs into what management experts call the "agency problem." The agency problem arises when the interest of the agent, i.e., the legislators, are not aligned with the interest of the principal, i.e., the people. Agency problem analysts therefore seek to set up a system that would provide assurance that the agent will, out of self-interest (greed or ambition), act in the interest of the principal. Our paper argues that certain aspects of our political system perversely misalign the interests of the politicians and those of the people.

Cast in agency theory terms, we argue that political reforms are necessary in the following areas:

- Politicians, and rightly so, see themselves as the agent only of the people who have the power to vote and not as the agent of all the people. Enfranchisement of all stakeholders especially the Overseas Filipino Workers is a necessary reform.
- Politicians need funds to be elected as agents of the people. They are therefore under pressure to act as agents for vested interests. We need electoral finance reform that enables them to draw both their financial and political support from the people.
- Vested interests, as part of the electorate, can legitimately work for their own agenda subject only to transparency and accountability. Legitimizing the lobbying process is a necessary reform. It will allow vested interests to legitimately make political contribution to political parties and to politicians. This transparency allows the general public, like in the Enron case, to be fully informed on potential conflicts of interests that may exist when certain public issues are discussed by politicians.

Weakest link

Once the interest of the agent, i.e. the politician, has been aligned with the interest of the principal, i.e. the public, we propose to correct the present imbalance in power between the executive, the legislative and the judiciary. Our legislators are the weakest link because they have lost the power of the purse to the executive branch. Only by regaining the power of the purse could Congress achieve full equality with the executive branch of the government. Again, if we look at the American model, we note that the US has achieved parity through the existence of two crucial congressional agencies.

- The American General Accounting Office (GAO).

The General Accounting Office is the investigative arm of Congress. It exists to support the Congress in meeting its Constitutional responsibilities and to help improve the performance and accountability of the federal government for the American people. GAO examines the use of public funds, evaluates federal programs and activities, and provides analyses, options, recommendations, and other assistance to help the Congress make effective oversight, policy and funding decisions.

In contrast, the Commission on Audit is an independent Constitutional body. It lost its power when it lost the power of pre-audit. Now it is as effective with the executive branch as Andersen has been with Enron. Congress must work out a constructive partnership with our Commission on Audit.

- The American Congressional Budget Office.

The mission of the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) is to provide the Congress with the objective, timely, nonpartisan analyses needed for economic and budget decisions and with the information and estimates required for the Congressional budget process.

In contrast, while the House of Representatives has the Congressional Planning and Budget Department (CPBD), the Senate has no such body. Congress must enact a law to create an agency similar to the Congressional Budget Office of the American Congress.

In sum then, we argue that for democracy to work in the Philippines:

- Political ambition must be made as respectable as private greed.
- Political reforms must be made to align the interest of the politicians with the people.
- The power of the purse must be regained by Congress. *(Dr. Limlingan is a professor at the Asian Institute of Management)*

BSP readies additional perks for bank mergers

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas is planning to expand the package of incentives offered to banks to encourage mergers in the industry.

"We need to offer more incentives to banks, but we have not thought about the additional perks we can offer," Bangko Sentral Deputy Governor Alberto Reyes said in an interview.

The incentives that the central bank made available to encourage banks to merge expired in February.

According to Reyes, the policy-making Monetary Board can re-introduce these incentives and add a few more perks once banks again find an appetite for mergers and acquisitions.

Reyes said the central bank could offer "some financial assistance" or ease some of the required financial ratios.

He reported that although the package of incentives related to mergers and acquisitions had expired, banks that went through a consolidation were still available of these perks.

To spur mergers and acquisitions, the BSP allowed banks to implement a staggered booking of valuation reserves, relocate branches, re-appraise fixed assets and comply with the one-percent general provision within five years.

Merging banks were also exempted from the prohibition against interlocking management.

The central bank has reiterated its call for banks to merge and create "stronger units" to strengthen the financial system.

BPI profit down 30% in Q1

BANK of the Philippine Islands, the country's second largest bank, saw its net income drop by 30.5 percent in the first quarter this year to P1.484 billion, from last year's P2.1 billion.

Bank officials said this was because the bank had an unusually high base for comparison since last year's first quarter performance was considered "spectacularly strong."

BPI last year posted a net income of P5.27 billion, or an average of P1.32 billion per quarter.

For this first quarter, BPI registered a net interest income of P5.229 billion and a net interest expense of P2.823 billion. It also provided P264.57 million for probable losses during the period.

BPI president Xavier Loinaz estimated that the bank's profit would likely grow by 5 percent to 10 percent this year, with the same range of loan growth.

BPI's main thrusts this year are to expand its total loan portfolio and dispose of non-performing assets.

The bank's non-performing loan ratio jumped to 14.9 percent by the close of the first quarter this year from 13.41 percent in the previous quarter.

He said the bank would set aside P1 billion to P1.5 billion in additional loan loss reserves and write off as much as P2 billion in worthless or unrecoverable assets.

The publicly listed universal bank also aims to continue acquiring loan portfolios.

Low interest rates, while a key challenge for the bank because it cut into margins, can lead to higher loan volumes, he said.

BPI recently acquired a P400-million salary loan portfolio from Pilipinas Shell and a P2.5-billion loan portfolio from ABN-Amro Savings Bank.

"We will acquire existing portfolios as the opportunities arise," Loinaz said in a presentation to BPI stockholders.

The bank is also looking at increasing the share of consumer loans in its total loan portfolio from 25 percent to one-third. ***Elena Torrijos***

Mirant earmarks ₱500M for 'O-Ilaw'

By Ronnel W. Domingo

POWER generating company Mirant Philippines Corp. plans to spend P500 million next year to provide electricity to 500 remote barangays in line with the government's 'O-Ilaw' rural electrification program.

Mirant Philippines vice president Allan Paul Flake said yesterday that this was on top of the 1,000 barangays that the company intended to serve this year for a total cost of P1 billion.

"We are doing this to give back to the society the fruits of our business," Flake told the INQUIRER.

He noted that Mirant posted the highest net income among all companies in the country in 2000.

Securities and Exchange Commission data showed that Mirant—formerly Southern Energy Holdings Philippines Inc.—posted a net income of P8.5 billion in 2000. Flake did not give income figures for 2001.

He said Mirant's rural electrification efforts were also meant to inspire other big firms to do the same.

"We want to persuade companies like San Miguel, Ayala and the others to also contribute in providing basic services like power to communities around the country," Flake said.

He said Mirant wanted to complete first the provision of electricity to the 1,000 barangays this year before it would draw up a detailed plan for next year's 500 barangays.

"Our goal is to cover the first 500 communities by July and the other 500 by December this year," he said.

Mirant launched its Project Beacon (Barangay Electrification Assistance for the Country) two years ago.

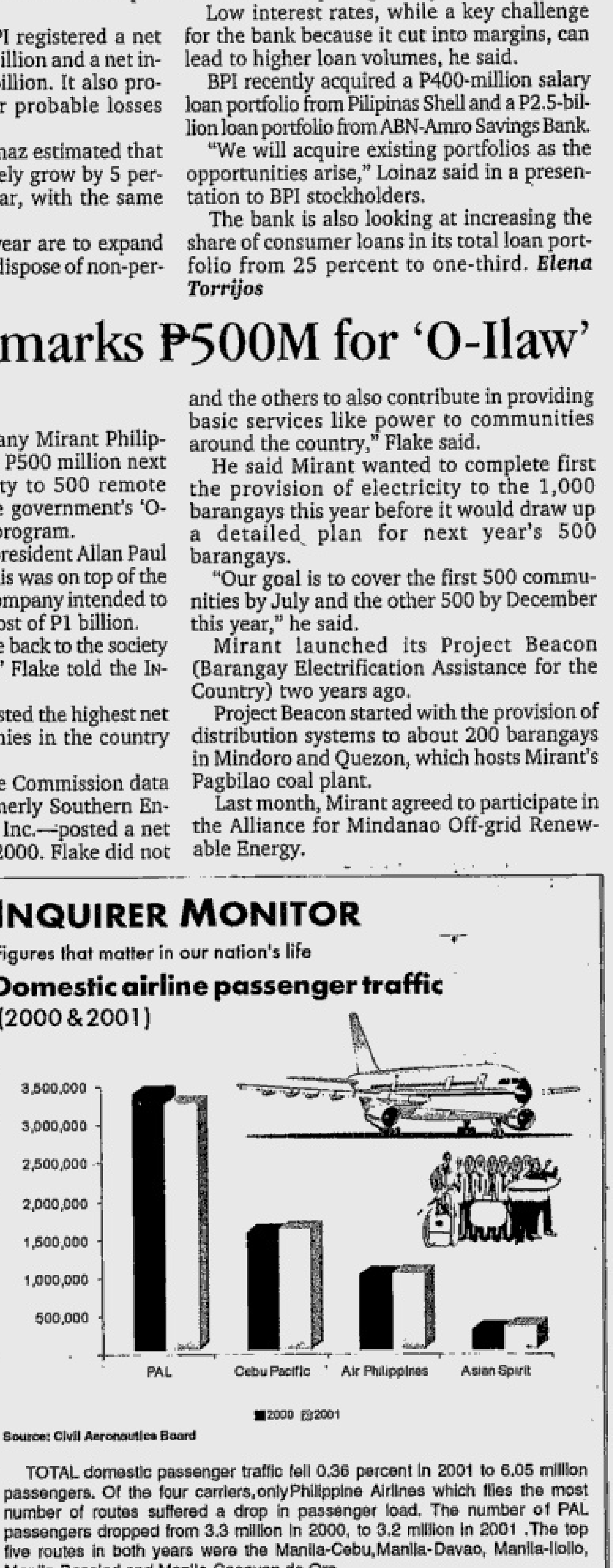
Project Beacon started with the provision of distribution systems to about 200 barangays in Mindoro and Quezon, which hosts Mirant's Pagbilao coal plant.

Last month, Mirant agreed to participate in the Alliance for Mindanao Off-grid Renewable Energy.

INQUIRER MONITOR

Figures that matter in our nation's life

Domestic airline passenger traffic
(2000 & 2001)



Source: Civil Aeronautics Board

TOTAL domestic passenger traffic fell 0.36 percent in 2001 to 6.05 million passengers. Of the four carriers, only Philippine Airlines which flies the most number of routes suffered a drop in passenger load. The number of PAL passengers dropped from 3.3 million in 2000, to 3.2 million in 2001 .The top five routes in both years were the Manila-Cebu, Manila-Davao, Manila-Iloilo, Manila-Bacolod and Manila-Cagayan de Oro.

Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research

SEC trims plans for deficient pre-need firms

By Elena R. Torrijos

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission has restricted the number of plans a pre-need company can sell unless it meets the SEC's minimum paid-up capital requirement.

"Pre-need companies selling two to three types of pre-need plans with a minimum paid-up capital of P50 million but below P75 million shall be authorized to sell only one plan type," the SEC said in a memorandum circular approved on Tuesday.

The commission requires pre-need companies to maintain a minimum paid-up capital of P100 million.

Only companies that meet this requirement may sell traditional education plans or offer three-type plans. Those with a paid-up capital of P75 million have been allowed to sell two-type plans.

The SEC ordered pre-need companies to make known their preference not later than May 7.

"However, pre-need companies are not precluded from infusing the required paid-up capital to enable such companies to sell the plan types they have been previously authorized to sell. This shall also apply to companies selling traditional plans but do not meet the P100-million paid-up requirement," SEC Chair Lilia Bautista said.

The commission has given deficient pre-need companies until May 30 to raise their capital to P50 million or face suspension.

New entrants to the industry, on the other hand, will have to meet the P100-million minimum capital requirement.

The SEC has reported that 45 pre-need companies have been licensed this year, fewer than last year's as the industry is going through a consolidation.

Out of these 45, 66 percent have yet to meet the SEC's P100-million minimum capital requirement.

A number of pre-need companies previously failed to service claims of their plan holders because of large trust fund deficiencies arising from unrealistic assumptions, bad investments and previously lax regulation.

To solve this problem, the SEC has over the past two years tightened considerably its rules governing pre-need companies in order to weed out the bad eggs in the industry and prevent more failures.

Taiwan investors still keen on RP, says Teco

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

A TOP Taiwanese official has concurred with the Manila Economic and Cultural Office's outlook that the Philippines could lure as much as $1 billion in foreign direct investments (FDI) from Taiwan over the next three years.

Taiwan Economic and Cultural Office representative Benjamin Lo said the $1-billion investment target was "achievable" considering the number of interested Taiwanese investors in the pipeline.

Lo said Taiwanese investors continued to look for business opportunities in the Philippines despite the growing trend of FDI inflows to China because of its proximity to Taipei and the quality of its workforce.

The Philippine currently accounts for 9 percent of Taiwan's $200-million yearly FDI to Asean. The country's share is the smallest among key Asean countries behind Malaysia (27 percent), Singapore (19 percent), Thailand (18 percent), Vietnam (16 percent) and Indonesia (11 percent).

Meco is targeting to attract Taiwanese companies to invest in petrochemicals, leather goods and accessories, aquaculture, garment accessories, processed tropical fruits, fabricated metals and components.

Unfortunately, Lo said most of these investments were likely to remain on hold until the government resolves pestering concerns of Taiwanese businessmen, specifically peace and order, and labor unrest.

"The key to unlocking Taiwanese investment into the Philippines is to resolve the labor and security issues here," Lo said.

He cited the labor dispute at Nissan Motor Philippines Inc., controlled by Taiwan automotive giant Yulon, as one of those being closely monitored by Taiwanese businessmen.

Nissan was forced to shut down operations for more than a month last year due to a strike in its Laguna plant as workers demanded for higher benefits which management found unreasonable. Although Nissan has resumed operations with the government intervention, the dispute between labor and management remains unresolved.

On peace and order, Lo said Taiwanese were concerned about their personal security in the country especially with the rise in the kidnappings in recent months.

But Lo pointed out that despite these security concerns, Taiwan was one of the few countries that did not issue a travel advisory to its countrymen going to the Philippines.

MWSS to tap Laguna Lake for additional water supply

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE METROPOLITAN Waterworks and Sewerage System has revived plans to tap Laguna Lake as a new source to supply an additional 300 million liters of water a day to the southern parts of Metro Manila.

According to government documents, the MWSS is currently conducting a feasibility study using a grant from the Dutch government to determine whether Laguna Lake can be used as a source of safe and affordable tap water.

There has been strong opposition to this plan, as civic and environmental groups, backed up by some politicians, consider Laguna Lake as more of a fishing ground than a source of drinking water.

The MWSS, however, believes that with a water crisis seen hitting the country in two years, there is a need to tap new sources to supply the capital region's growing demand for water.

Experts estimate that unless new sources are found by 2004, the MWSS and its concessionaires will be unable to meet demands for water in Metro Manila. Households in the capital region are seen requiring between 4 billion and 4.5 billion liters of water a day in two years.

The MWSS' concessionaires—Maynilad Water Services Inc. and Manila Water Co. Inc., companies being financed by two of the country's biggest conglomerates—are backing the use of Laguna Lake as a source of tap water.

Maynilad president Rafael Alunan III, a former local government secretary under the Ramos administration, said in an interview last week that the MWSS' feasibility study would only cover the eastern portion of the lake.

"Under the concession agreement, the MWSS was to deliver to Maynilad, through a build-operate-transfer scheme, 300 million liters a day with a full cost past-through to consumers on Jan. 1, 2000, but this was delayed due to some political issues. The MWSS has newly committed to deliver the project by 2007," Alunan disclosed.

He added that the project would serve a million people living mostly in the southern parts of Metro Manila, including Parañaque, Las Piñas, Muntinlupa and parts of Cavite.

The National Economic and Development Authority rejected the MWSS' first feasibility study on the P7-billion Laguna Lake bulk water supply project.

Neda concluded that the MWSS should tap sources that would be less costly than Laguna Lake.

"After reviewing the proposals for this project, there will be environmental and other local government problems that will arise if we insist that Laguna Lake will be the only source for the 300 million liters a day. We advise them to explore other possibilities of water sources," Neda director Ruben Reinoso said in an interview.

HP-led alliance formed to provide mobile phone services, technology

By Abigail L. Ho

HEWLETT-PACKARD Philippines Corp., the local arm of global computing and imaging solutions and services provider Hewlett-Packard Co., has formed an alliance with eight other "best-of-breed" vendors to provide mobile services to the millions of cellular phone subscribers and the thousands of personal digital assistant (PDA) users in the country.

A first in the Philippines, the HP Mobile Applications Council brought together eight firms that make available products and technologies that were aimed at providing "new tools for new rules" in the fast growing mobile industry.

The alliance member-companies are HP, Lopez-owned firms BayanMap Corp. and Webcast Technologies Inc. (FindMe LBS), information technology consulting firm Sequel Solutions Inc., enterprise mobile and interactive multimedia solutions provider Intellimedia Corp., software development firm Jupiter Systems Inc., software giant Microsoft Corp., business solutions provider eMaya and ED Machines Inc.

BayanMap president Edwin Domingo said in a news briefing yesterday that most Filipinos had a very limited budget when it comes to high-technology products and services, like home-based computers and the services derived from these units.

This being the case, the market for mobile applications and services was all the bigger as cellular phones became necessities for around 12 million Filipinos, he added.

"There's a demand. The market is there," Sequel Solutions president Cliff Eala said.

Eala's company powers the text messaging-based GMA Network game show Txtrs 5 as well as the text messaging component of popular ABS-CBN game show, Game Ka Na Ba?

Based on the capacity of Sequel's systems that handle incoming text messages from viewers and prospective contestants, he said more and more people were becoming hooked to using their mobile devices for all sorts of services

"For some of our promos, our system is supposed to handle as many as 1,000 messages per second," he said.

He added that the number of text messages processed by cellular giants Globe Telecom Inc. and Smart Communications Inc. had already reached 150 million per day, sent and received by around 12 million cell phone-toting Filipinos.

PDAs are also gradually gaining popularity among Filipinos, with users ranging from the young professionals to ranking executives.

RP auditing practices . . .

From page B1

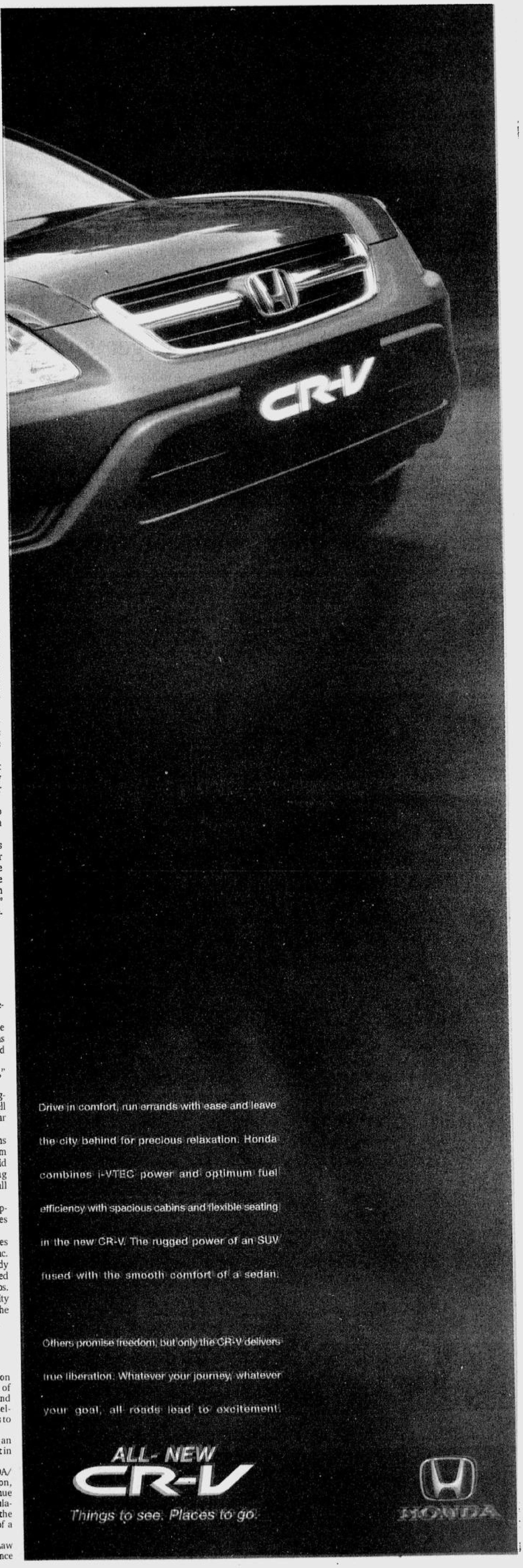
by January 2005, thereby disallowing deferral of foreign exchange losses by then while all foreign exchange differentials must be fully amortized beforehand.

Aside from the shift to international accounting standards, the bank called for the strengthening of training and quality assurance as well as the regulatory and enforcement capacity of the SEC and the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

The bank also said the competence of auditors must be improved by requiring: practical experience before the issuance of license; continuing professional educational program prior to renewal of license, and retraining existing certified public accounts on international standards.

Other regulatory reforms backed by the bank were to:

- Amend the 1975 Revised Accountancy Law and the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) Act of 2000 to strengthen the Board of Accountancy (BOA)'s capacity to license and regulate the accounting profession while delegating some of its duties and responsibilities to the Picpa;
- Revitalize Picpa to make it function as an effective professional body which could assist in the regulation of CPAs;
- Strengthen coordination among the BOA/PRC, the Commission on Higher Education, SEC, BSP, and the Bureau of Internal Revenue leading to dissemination of laws, rules, regulations, standards and guidelines affecting the practice of accountancy and the creation of a master list of all CPAs, and.
- Amend the 1975 Revised Accountancy Law to provide for the creation of a quality assurance review mechanism.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BOJ policy board upgrades economic outlook

TOKYO—The Bank of Japan's policy board on Tuesday upgraded its economic outlook based on improvements in exports and production but remained cautious about the Japanese economy's ability to move into a full-fledged recovery.

The nine-member policy board, which decided to maintain the central bank's current easing stance, also predicted a continued fall in prices and highlighted a spike in long-term interest rates as a possible risk to the economy.

"Overall, Japan's economy is expected to stop deteriorating toward the latter half of fiscal 2002, but an anticipated autonomous recovery is not likely to gain much momentum," it said in a semi-annual outlook report on the economy and prices.

"On the outlook for fiscal 2002 and early fiscal 2003, an increase in exports and progress in inventory adjustments is expected to induce a recovery in production. This will lead to an improvement in corporate profits and capital spending, especially in the manufacturing sector," it said.

On the other hand, personal consumption was expected to remain relatively weak throughout fiscal 2002 as firms continued to slash wages and jobs, it said.

A rebound led by the US economy and improvements in Southeast Asia had given hope the moribund economy could pull out of its third recession in a decade.

Mamoru Yamazaki, chief economist at Barclays Capital, said, "The report reflects the growing view that there are signs of the economy's bottoming out."

The nine-member policy board produced a core forecast for gross domestic product ranging between minus 0.5 percent and plus 0.1 percent for the current fiscal year ending next March.

That compared with a core range of minus 1.1 percent and plus 0.1 percent in its previous October outlook report.

The government has forecast the economy to post around zero growth for the year ending next March, although private economists are slightly more pessimistic.

A recent Reuters poll of 28 economists forecast the economy to shrink 0.5 percent for fiscal 2002-03.

A persistent decline in prices was expected to continue.

The policy board forecast the core consumer price index, which excludes volatile fresh food prices, to fall between 0.8 percent and one percent in fiscal 2002-03.

Nationwide core CPI for fiscal 2001-02 was down 0.8 percent year-on-year—the steepest fall on record—following the previous year's fall of 0.5 percent, government data showed on Friday.

Core CPI is a closely watched indicator for monetary policy since the central bank has said it will maintain its so-called quantitative easing framework—targeting the amount of money rather than interest rates—until the year-on-year changes in core CPI stabilize at zero or above.

As such, economists expect the central bank to stand pat on policy for some time despite an improvement in the economy.

"This shows that the BOJ thinks deflation will continue even though the GDP contraction might be slightly smaller," said Kazuhiko Ogata, a senior economist at HSBC Securities. *Reuters*

Low-income Singaporeans to get government aid

SINGAPORE—Lower-income households will receive government assistance for at least five years to offset a proposed hike in levies on everyday goods here, a government minister said Wednesday.

"Singaporeans are understandably worried about the prospects of an increase" on taxes on goods and services, Deputy Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong said in a May Day address.

However, the government will introduce an offset package aimed at the lower half of the household-income bracket that "will definitely be enough to cover the extra tax" for at least five years, he said.

Lee said further details would be released Friday, when an anxiously awaited budget announcement is due.

The government is expected to raise levies on goods and services from 3 percent to 5 percent next year, while cutting top income- and corporate-tax rates to 20 percent in three years.

Singapore's corporate and income taxes are among the lowest in Asia.

The top rates are 24.5 percent and 26 percent, respectively. The current 3-percent tax on goods and services is among the lowest in the world.

The government says the move is needed to attract foreign companies to this tiny southeast Asian island, but many Singaporeans say it shifts the tax burden from large multinational firms towards citizens.

Singapore is battling the worst recession in its 36-year history while attempting to re-focus its economy on high-tech industries—like life sciences—as manufacturing jobs migrate to countries with lower wage rates such as China. *AP*

AN EMPLOYEE of South Korea's Daewoo Motor looks at an engine displayed at a Daewoo Motor plant in Pupyong, west of Seoul. General Motors Corp. is set to finalize its long-awaited takeover of key parts of the bankrupt Daewoo Motor. REUTERS

Heady days of equity options business may be over

CHICAGO—A passion for risk, a partner with deep pockets and the entrepreneurial spirit were once enough in the equity options business for a small independent trader to make quite a decent living.

But those heady days may be over for options traders, who thrive on high volatility from stormy stock markets.

Volatility has waned over the past year, as the stock market has remained depressed. Along with that, the prices of options, which give investors the right to buy or sell stocks at specified prices within a limited time period, have come down.

Increased competition from the multiple listings of options on different exchanges, the growth of electronic trade and the high costs of floor trading have driven a growing number of options specialist firms to band together or merge with bigger, more capitalized houses to stay afloat.

While consolidation has been underway for two years, it is still very much on the front burner. The issue is expected to be one of the main issues at the two-day annual Options Industry Conference in Palm Springs, California, starting May 3.

"This consolidation is driven by economies of scale," Alex Jacobson, vice president of business development at the all-electronic International Securities Exchange, said, adding it was now limited by the small number of remaining firms.

Huge financial institutions like Goldman Sachs Group Inc., Toronto-Dominion Bank and Knight Trading Group Inc., the top dealer of Nasdaq stocks, have snapped up a number of options trading firms.

The trend has expanded the trading arms of these firms, which previously provided orders to brokers but now offer full service in the options business.

"At one time, some of these firms wore one hat," said Jack Kennedy, executive director of the DPM Association of Chicago, which represents 75 percent of the designated primary market makers on the Chicago Board Options Exchange. "They predominantly were either a bank, an order flow provider or a liquidity provider. Now they may be wearing all three hats." *Reuters*

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RP, 50 others put on notice for IPR violations

WASHINGTON—The US government on Tuesday alleged that the Philippines, 49 other nations and the European Union were not doing enough to halt the piracy of US movies, music and other copyrighted material.

The Bush administration singled out Ukraine as the worst offender in its annual review of how well other countries are protecting intellectual property rights.

It designated Ukraine as a priority foreign country, putting the nation on notice that it could be hit with further economic sanctions if it does not do more to halt production of tens of millions of pirated music compact discs.

President George W. Bush's administration has already imposed two sets of trade sanctions on Ukraine over the piracy issue, which American companies claim costs them $200 million annually.

In addition to Ukraine's designation, the administration put another 14 countries and the European Union on a priority watch list and listed 33 other nations on a watch list, the lowest designation of concern about property right protection.

China and Paraguay were also mentioned in the report because of continued monitoring to make sure they live up to previous agreements.

US industries contend that they are losing $20 billion to $22 billion annually because of copyright piracy.

Jack Valenti, head of the Motion Picture Association of America, praised the new report and said the administration was to be commended for calling attention to piracy problems in Taiwan, Thailand, Malaysia and the Bahamas.

"We must work strenuously to reduce optical disc piracy in every region of the world," Valenti said in a statement. "With 40 percent of our industry's revenues earned from overseas distribution, it is critical that as a nation we protect our most valuable assets around the world." *AP*

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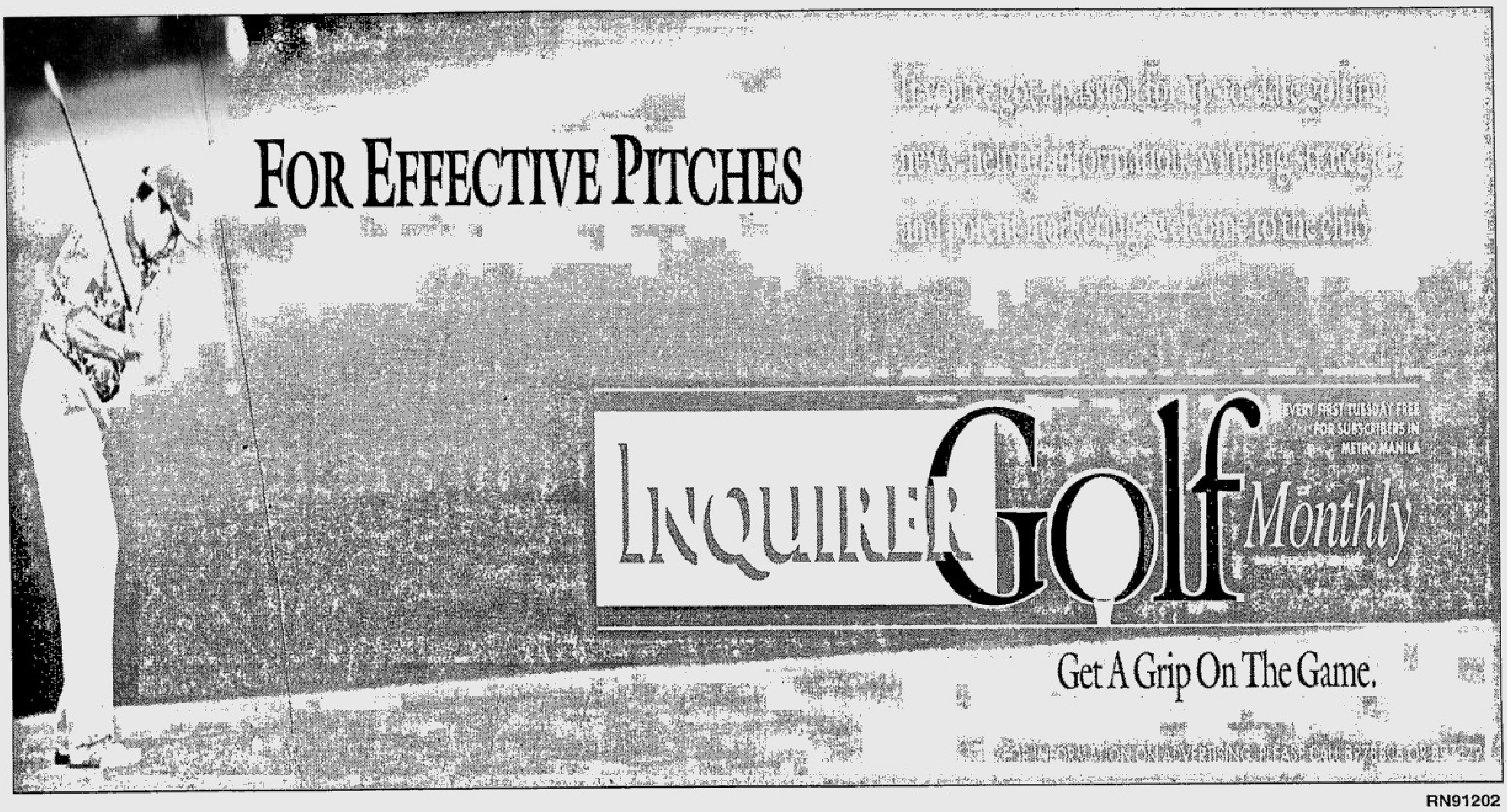
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People, Events & Products

Aries Espinosa, Editor
aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph

Xavier U-Ateneo de Cagayan offers more scholarships

FR. ANTONIO S. Samson, SJ, president of Xavier University-Ateneo de Cagayan, recently announced the additional availability of 50 full scholarships and 100 half-scholarships for school year 2002-2003.

The selection of potential scholars from high school who graduated last March will be based on academic merit, leadership capabilities, and financial need. Fr. Samson also added that applicants to the scholarships must have taken and obtained a percentile rating of 60 percent and above in the University's administered tests (Atcu or CSAT); are in need of financial assistance, and are very interested in pursuing any of the following courses: BS in Elementary Education, BS in Secondary Education, BS Agriculture, BS Food Technology, BS Agri-Business, BS Mathematics, BS Chemistry, BS Psychology, BS Marine Biology, AB English, AB Filipino and AB History. Academic excellence scholarships are also available to deserving students after a semester or freshman year at Xavier University-Ateneo de Cagayan.

Interested incoming and deserving college freshmen who wish to avail themselves of the scholarships are required to submit in a long-sized brown envelope an application letter addressed to Fr. Antonio S. Samson, SJ, president, Xavier University-Ateneo de Cagayan, Corrales Avenue, Cagayan de Oro City 9000. Aside from the application letter, two letters of recommendation from the principal and subject teacher, a duly accomplished scholarship questionnaire from the XU Admissions Office, high school transcript of records (Form 137E) and high school report card (Form 138) and a photocpy of the most recent income tax return (ITR) of the parents must accompany the application letter.

Completed application requirements must then be submitted to Charito Ferrer, admissions coordinator of the promotions, admissions, counseling and testing services (Pacts), Lucas Hall 104, Xavier University-Ateneo de Cagayan, Corrales Avenue, 9000 Cagayan de Oro City.

Applicants may also call (088)858-3116 or (8822)723-116 locals 2023 and 2024 for more details.

MOST OUTSTANDING HEALTHCARE FIRM

Blue Cross Healthcare, the leading and trusted name in health maintenance organizations, was given the prestigious National Consumers' Excellence Award for Best Healthcare Company at the 17th Annual Parangal ng Bayan Awards for 2002. Also chosen as the National Consumers Union of the Philippines Awardee for Most Outstanding Healthcare Company for 2000, Blue Cross Healthcare has been providing health maintenance services to reputable and respected companies like Jollibee Foods Corp., Compaq, Honda and Global Sources. Shown is Dr. Robert Kalalo, Blue Cross medical claims manager (fourth from left), receiving the plaque and certificate of recognition.

MACANUDO PREMIUM CIGAR TRAINING

A cigar training on Macanudo premium cigars was conducted recently at Mandarin Hotel for the cigar enthusiasts. Swedish Match Philippines Inc., manufacturer and distributor of Macanudo premium cigars, invited Bruce Lewis of General Cigars to conduct this training. Joining them during the event were (seated, from right) Cynthia Reyes, general manager of Fuma Tobacco, Erlene Silvino, manager of Forth & Tay, Bruce Lewis, international business development manager of General Cigars, and Robert Rosenzweig, regional area manager of Swedish Match for Asia. Also shown is Cergen Go, sales and marketing manager of Swedish Match Phils. Inc.

Naic's grand celebration on its 211th birthday

NAIC, strategically located in the historic province of Cavite, the cradle of Philippine independence, is expected to have a its own place in Philippine tourism with the charter celebration of a unique festivity dubbed "Naic-Gikan Festival 2002".

In 1971, the community that was near Maragondon was named Naic after the old archaic word "Cañayic", meaning "the town near one another" or "the other side".

Another story was told that, during the Spanish regime, a group of Spaniards was traveling through the locality. They met an old man who was then feeding his pigs. The Spaniards asked the old man the name of the place. The old man thought the question asked was what the pigs were doing. He immediately replied "Naigik." The word Naic was coined, and since then became the name of the place.

The people's desire to keep the origin of Naic has compelled the present administration, headed by Mayor Efren C. Nazareno and Vice Mayor Rudy Nazareno, to sponsor the charter celebration of the "Naic-Gikan Festival 2002."

The highlights of the festival, which will coincide with the town's 211th anniversary, will feature activities like the Naic-Gikan Parade featuring live pigs on floats, a trade fair featuring the town's local products, a Palaro ng Lahi, and Olympigs, a Sing-aling Videoke Contest, a band concert, a drum and lyre band competition, and the much-awaited Mr. and Miss EnviroNaic. It will also feature street dancing and the annual Sto. Bambino Karakol.

The festival will culminate on May 4 with a dance party and awards night.

Naicaños from the United States and other parts of the globe are expected to come.

The festival is expected to be another tourism attraction not just for Naic, but for Cavite province and the whole Philippines, as well.

BITS Clips

PSLIS 3-day seminar workshop

THE PHILIPPINE Society of Librarians and Information Specialists (PSLIS) will conduct a three-day seminar-workshop on the global impact of the changing environment on libraries and information professionals from May 9 to 11 at the Corregidor Hotel and Resort, Corregidor Island, Cavite City. Librarians, information professionals, teachers and other information providers and front liners are invited to attend this seminar-workshop for knowledge enrichment and interaction with fellow professionals. Participants are requested to make checks payable to PSLIS. Registration is ongoing. For further inquiries, call Lily (929-2180), Lynn (724-1994, 726-0931 local 253), Lito (0919-3350579), Joven (527-9672), Dorie (416-3587), Ida (891-0307 or 0917-5315967), or Beth (932-1295).

Faber-Castell summer art workshops

FABER-CASTELL, the brand for quality art materials produced since 1761, announces the series of free workshops scheduled this summer. Presented in cooperation with SM Supermalls, Faber-Castell Summer Art Workshops 2002 will be held in various branches of SM Supermalls in Metro Manila. Workshops are scheduled from April 30 to May 2 at the SM City Manila Entertainment Plaza, May 14 to 15 at the SM Southmall Activity Center and May 28 and 29 at the SM Fairview Activity Center. For more information on the workshops, call the marketing department of Faber-Castell at 361-7391 to 92, Monday to Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Persian carpets exhibit

ON MAY 3 and 4, Friday and Saturday, a two-day exciting event for all carpet lovers will be held at the Dusit Hotel Nikko. Collectors piece carpets—the range of tribal, nomadic and workshop pieces that are specifically selected from various Iranian tribes, villages and small towns—will be some of the exotic carpets to be on display and for sale at introductory prices. The carpets come in different sizes, interesting designs and beautiful colors old and new. Everyone is invited. Admission is free.

Seminar on staffing services

MANPOWER, the world's foremost staffing solutions provider, is taking the lead in helping its clients organize its workforce in compliance with the tighter regulations imposed by the government. Coming on the heels of the clients-only seminar on the Department of Labor and Employment Order 18-02 held last April, Manpower is organizing a similar seminar, this time with prospective clients and other interested parties. The event, dubbed "Staffing services under the new Department Order" will be held on May 3, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. at the Ipil-Ipil Room of Dusit Hotel in Makati City. For more information, call Manpower at 897-4614.

The Pana Media Party

MEDIA and marketing created a vast ripple of fun and flair at the Pana-sponsored Media Part recently. Unlike other festivities usually celebrated in one of the ballrooms of Manila's ritzy hotels, the event was undoubtedly a unique bash as this was held at the classy and wide dining hall of Superferry 12 of William, Gothong & Aboitiz Inc., the event's official sponsor. All in all, it was an ultimate party by the bay.

Electrifying excitement permeated the nighttime air as Pana celebrated the event in Hawaiian, the night's official theme. Media friends from the various broadsheets, tabloid and television stations, as well as Pana's board members arrived in attractive floral shorts and sarongs with sailor hats, while the Philippine Ethnic Dancers serenaded them with Hawaiian songs.

The party was a befitting moment to award the newspaper publications, including the Inquirer, which created the beautiful newspaper supplements for the induction affair last January. The board of directors led by Gigi Rodriguez commended these newspapers.

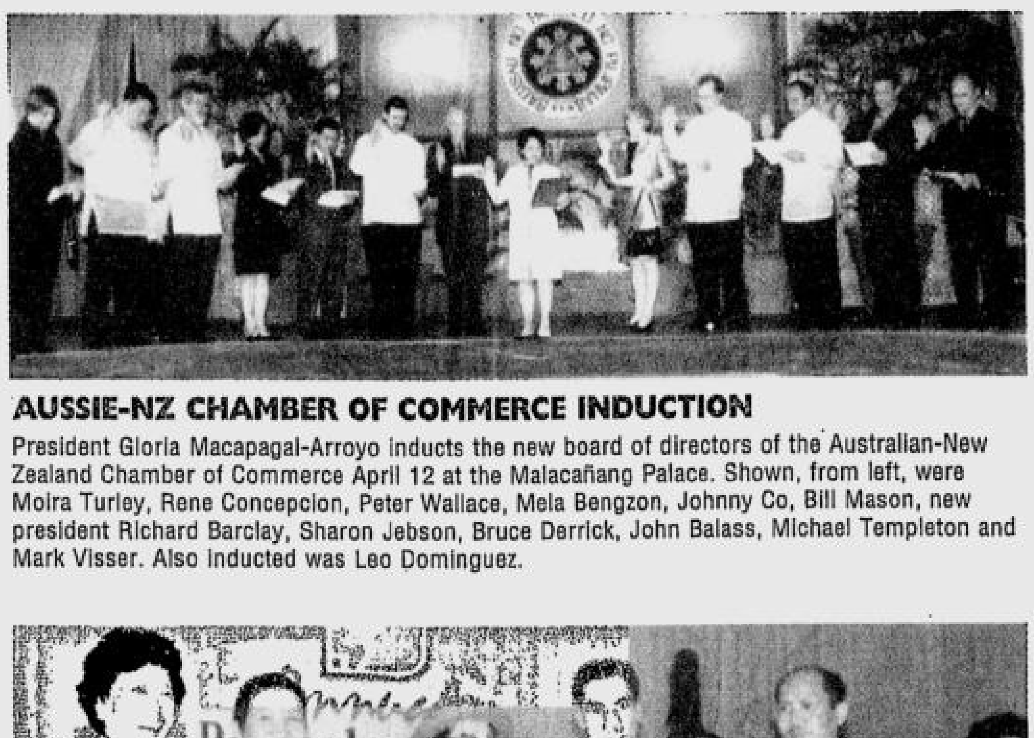
Among the early birds were Inquirer's advertising VP Pepito R. Olarte.

The co-presentors of the event were the Inquirer, Procter & Gamble Distributing Phils. Inc., Molecules & Particles, Globe Telecom, and Smart Telecom.

A PLAQUE of appreciation was awarded WG&A for sponsoring the event. From left were Dr. Nonie S. Azarcon, Gigi Rodriguez, Gian Galvez of WG&A, Jun Alcantara, Susie Achacoso-Cruz, Jojo Samson and Atoy Babasa.

THE CAST of IBC 13's "Lunch Break" hosted this special function for the media.

AWARDED early birds were, from left, Pepito Olarte of the Inquirer, Imelda Cruz of Chic Magazine, Vicky Centeno of Woman's Home Companion, Luttie Tabalba of Malaya and Josie Tan-Magtoto of Mr & Ms Magazine.

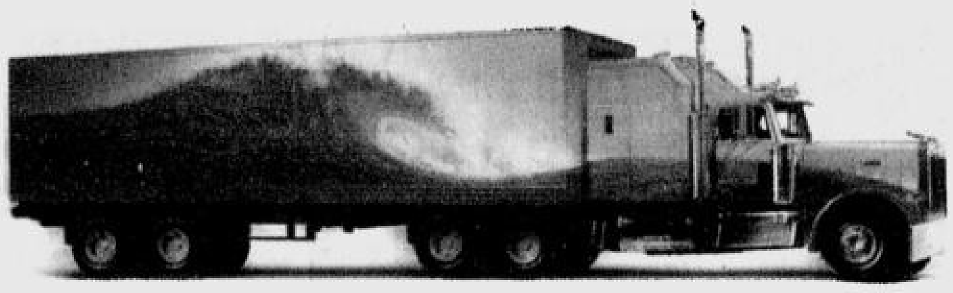


AUSSIE-NZ CHAMBER OF COMMERCE INDUCTION

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo inducts the new board of directors of the Australian-New Zealand Chamber of Commerce April 12 at the Malacañang Palace. Shown, from left, were Moira Turley, Rene Concepcion, Peter Wallace, Mela Bengzon, Johnny Co, Bill Mason, new president Richard Barclay, Sharon Jebson, Bruce Derrick, John Balass, Michael Templeton and Mark Visser. Also inducted was Leo Dominguez.

MOST OUTSTANDING PIZZA BRAND

Pizza Hut was recognized as the Most Outstanding Pizza Brand by the National Consumers Council during the 17th Parangal ng Bayan awarding ceremony held recently. NCC has cited Pizza Hut for its continued commitment to uphold product quality and excellent service to its consumers in the Philippines for the past 18 years. Accepting the award for Pizza Hut is Henry Chua, advertising and promotions manager. Also shown are (from left) honorary awards chair Dr. Sonia Y. Lim, honorary Ambassador Barry Gusi and Consumers Union of the Philippines secretary general Lily S. Nicolas.


Patag man.

Judge rules HP, Compaq can go on

WILMINGTON, Delaware—A Delaware court on Tuesday cleared the way for Hewlett-Packard Co.'s $18-billion purchase of No. 2 personal computer maker Compaq Computer Corp., quashing an attempt by dissident shareholder Walter Hewlett to block the deal.

Hewlett conceded defeat just hours after the ruling, allowing HP to close the deal in a week as planned. In his concession, he promised to smooth the integration of the computer industry's largest-ever merger, one which he had fought for six months.

Earlier, Delaware Chancery Court Judge William Chandler upheld HP's March 19 shareholder vote and cleared HP chief executive Carly Fiorina of wrongdoing.

Chandler also rejected Hewlett's claims that HP management lied to shareholders about financial projections and bought votes from a key investor on the eve of the merger vote.

"Members of HP's senior management testified credibly, in accordance with the evidence and without exception," Chandler wrote in the decision.

Hewlett, who was ousted as an HP director last week, leaving the company without a member of the Hewlett or Packard families on its board for the first time in its 63-year history, said in a statement he would not appeal the ruling and would let the March 19 merger vote tally be certified.

"I will, therefore, now do everything possible to support the successful implementation of HP's acquisition of Compaq and encourage others who have shared my views in the past several months to do the same," he said.

"Clearly, we are gratified, and it is time we had the opportunity to move on," HP spokesperson Rebeca Robboy said in response.

Fiorina argues the merger will create a global computer powerhouse in a consolidating industry, while Hewlett has called the deal a multibillion-dollar mistake that will saddle HP with a huge low-profit personal computer business rather than enhance its high-end computing and printer businesses.

HP plans to join the two companies on May 7, beginning a long integration process that Fiorina calls the toughest part of the merger. Many HP employees opposed the plan, and some 15,000 workers—about 10 percent of the new company—will lose their jobs.

Fiorina would continue her quest to shake up the company, the main reason she was brought in three years ago as the first outsider to head HP, which saw its early model of community-oriented decision making tarnished in later years by a reputation for bureaucracy and entitlement.

"You've got to change people," said Martin Reynolds, an analyst at technology research firm Gartner Inc. "That's their biggest challenge—it is maintaining morale and the engagement of the employees over the next year."

Securities regulators and federal prosecutors have both probed the HP merger vote, but analysts have said the ruling by the Delaware court could strongly influence the course of those investigations.

Judge Chandler said Walter Hewlett failed to meet the burden of proof on both points in the lawsuit he filed against Palo Alto, California-based HP.

Hewlett alleged that HP had coerced shareholder Deutsche Bank to back the controversial merger by threatening to withdraw future investment banking business.

Hewlett also charged that HP had covered up internal financial forecasts that contradicted public statements about the two companies' progress toward integration, but Chandler denied that claim as well.

"Plaintiffs have failed to prove that HP management improperly enticed or coerced Deutsche Bank into voting in favor of the merger," Chandler wrote.

"Nothing in the record indicates that HP lied to or deliberately misled (shareholder adviser Institutional Shareholder Services) ISS or the HP shareholders about its integration efforts," he added.

Although some internal HP documents showed merger concerns not reflected by official forecasts, the former were rough planning documents and thus incomparable, he ruled.

Samuel Thompson, the director of the Center for Study of Mergers and Acquisitions at the University of Miami School of Law, said a higher court probably would have supported HP, had Hewlett asked for a second hearing.

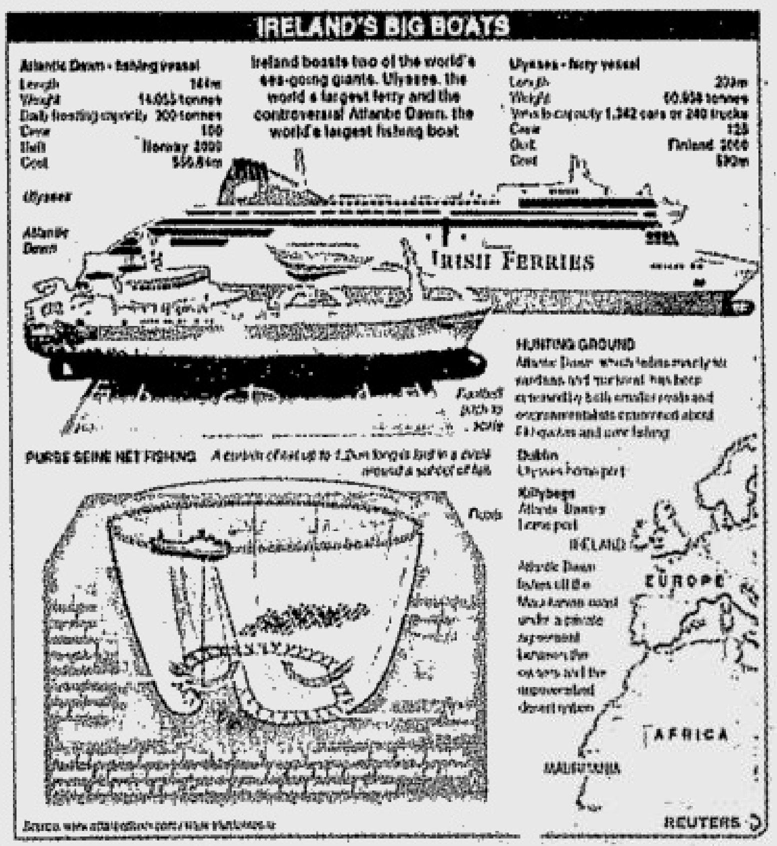
"It seems to be very strong for HP. The chances of it being reversed on appeal are very small, in my judgment." he said after hearing highlights of the ruling.

Since the merger was announced on Sept. 3, shares of HP have under-performed the computer hardware sector, dropping 26 percent, compared with a drop of 16 or 17 percent for both International Business Machines Corp. and Compaq and a 3-percent drop for the American Stock Exchange Computer Hardware Index.

In his ruling on what merger opponents had pointed to as a kind of "smoking gun," Chandler also cleared Fiorina from allegations of misconduct arising from an intercepted voicemail to Chief Financial Officer Bob Wayman, in which she said HP might have to do something "extraordinary" to convince Deutsche and another shareholder to back the merger.

Reuters

IRELAND'S BIG BOATS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Weight 14,055 tonnes
Daily freezing capacity 300 tonnes
Crew 100
Built Norway 2000
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Ulysses - ferry vessel
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Weight 50,938 tonnes
Vehicle capacity 1,342 cars or 240 trucks
Crew 125
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Ulysses
Atlantic Dawn
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IRELAND
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REUTERS

Sokor economy minister hints at new Micron talks

SEOUL—South Korean Finance and Economy Minister Jeon Yun-Churl said Wednesday new talks should be held to sell debt-stricken Hynix Semiconductor Inc. to Micron Technology Inc. of the United States.

But the world's third-largest memory chipmaker remained adamant that it wanted to stand on its own feet.

A day after the Hynix board vetoed an accord to sell the firm's core operations to Micron, Jeon urged South Korean creditor banks to accept any Micron offer for new negotiations.

"There is no need to refuse" any Micron offer to reopen talks, Jeon told reporters.

The decision of the Hynix board left the fate of the company in doubt again as it struggles with liabilities estimated at 9.0 trillion won ($6.7 billion).

Government officials previously warned the ailing chip company would collapse without an early injection of foreign capital.

Jeon called for creditors to resolve Hynix's problems as quickly as possible and said new loans to Hynix and debt write-offs would be "undesirable" if the ailing company insists on remaining independent.

Jeon said creditors should decide whether to place Hynix under court receivership.

Yonhap news agency quoted a senior Hynix official as saying the firm would sell its smaller non-memory chip business by the end of next year to help its bigger memory unit survive.

"One or two companies have already expressed interest in purchasing the non-memory chip business," the Hynix official said.

The Hynix board rejected a non-binding accord negotiated between key creditors and Micron, expressing doubt over the viability of the remaining Hynix businesses if Micron took over the company's core memory chip assets.

The decision followed protests by Hynix workers who threatened a strike if the accord went ahead. Unions insisted the company could survive without Micron.

Hynix earlier this month posted a net profit of 35 billion won in the first three months to March, its first profit for two years.

AFP

Frustrated Japanese try online forex trade

TOKYO—Foreign currency deposits are in vogue among savers in Japan, where rock-bottom interest rates mean putting hard-earned yen in the bank yields next to nothing.

Dollar accounts offer more interest, but a recent pause in the greenback's rise against the yen is making Japanese individual investors more determined about returns.

Many are turning to online currency trading.

By placing 100,000 yen ($777) with an online trading site operator, individuals can trade up to $10,000 or 10,000 euros at any time of the day or night.

Online margin-trading sites have mushroomed since Japanese regulatory changes in 1998 opened the way for non-banks to enter the foreign exchange business.

The sites are now seeing a surge in customers eager to put foreign currency deposits to work and lured by the low cost of doing so—transaction costs are one-tenth those at major banks.

Industry officials say overall, online currency trading in Japan by individuals and small firms has jumped more than 10-fold in the last three years to up to $60 million a day.

"Ten years ago, there was a certain shame attached to making money without breaking into a sweat," said Yoshimitsu Sasago, director at online trading operator Tradition Orient FX.

"But that's been overcome by this feeling of frustration that yen deposits aren't making any money, like grandparents not making enough to give their grandchildren pocket money," he said.

Holdings of foreign currency deposits and securities by Japanese households jumped 30 percent to 10.8 trillion yen in the year to September, Bank of Japan data showed.

Tradition Orient launched its 24-hour currency trading website in April for dollars and euros. The site is crammed with currency quotes and has images of professional dealers working in the $1.2 trillion-a-day market.

Adding to the allure of foreign currency savings for Japanese has been the phasing out of state guarantees on bank deposits in April, which has emboldened savers to hunt for better, albeit risky, investment alternatives to yen savings.

Opaque pricing sources gave online currency trading a bad reputation in the past, but site operators say better computer systems and an increase in liquidity have convinced more major banks to supply them with quotes.

Online margin volumes swelled to 28.2 billion yen at the end of March 2001 and the figure is expected to rise to 100 billion yen by March 2006, according to Yano Research Institute.

Nihon Unicom, a major online currency trading operator, said it now has 1,600 customers, compared with 250 in its first year of operations in 1999.

"Our business has grown steadily over the years, but the speed of growth has certainly gone up in the past year," said Nihon Unicom director Nobufumi Iimori.

Reuters

Japan's Aeon to cut around 6.3% of payroll

TOKYO—Major Japanese retailer Aeon Co. Ltd. said Wednesday that it would cut around 1,000 jobs, or 6.3 percent of its workforce, by next March in response to intensifying competition.

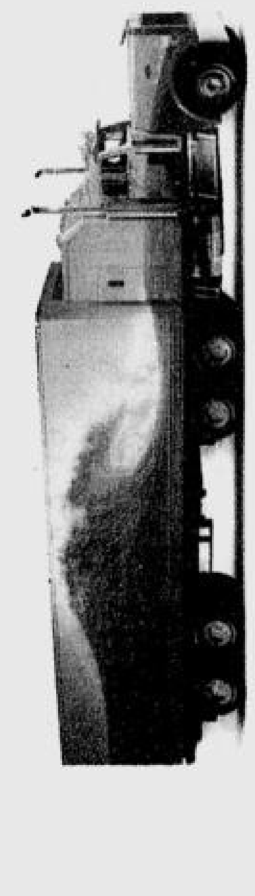
"Through natural attrition, we should be able to reduce about 1,000 full-time workers this fiscal year," said a spokesperson for the supermarket operator, ranked third in the industry based on sales.

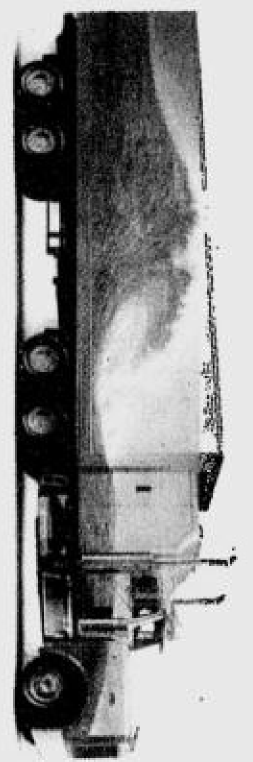
"We wanted to cut costs and use our part-time workers more," he said.

The retailer, with some 16,000 staff, only hired 57 full-time workers in April, the start of the Japanese business year.

Aeon used to hire about 1,300 to 1,600 people annually up to the year to March 2001.

AFP

Paahon man.
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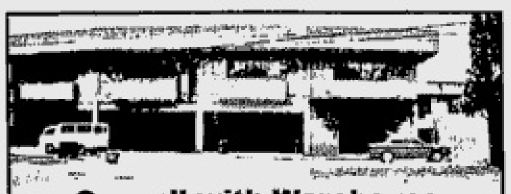
FACTORY/WHSE



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Cars/Vans Cheap 8203894

IT/HIACE 9136710/4333682

L300 T7411356

L300/Vans 578-8917(Roger)

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FACTORY/WHSE

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2% w/o taking car 7262780

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2% w/oTaking Car 3792083

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Exec. Secretary 453-0879/82

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ADMIN STAFF 9134470 RED

BSEED, BSE, COL. PROF Tel. # 7246756; 9265049

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LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is given that the estate of the late PIO PERMEJO was extrajudicially settled among his heirs as per Doc No. 1314163; Page No. 73; Book No. 14 Series of 2002 before Notary Public Atty Rafael Candelaria Jr. of Mandaluyong City
(PDI-April 18, 25 & May 2, 2002)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late MARIO M. LACSON has been extrajudicially settled per Doc. 191, Page 40, Book IX, Series 2002 of Notary Public Cesar D. Amoranto of Pasig City
(PDI-April 25, May 2, 9, 2002)

PERSONAL

Thank You Holy Spirit.

WANTED IMMEDIATELY

CUSTOMS DECLARANT

- B.S. Customs Administration graduate
- At least two (2) years experience as Declarant
- Computer literate (Word & Excel)
- Female, single, not more than 25 years old
- Good moral character

ACCOUNTING STAFF

- BSA or BSBA graduate
- At least two (2) years experience in general accounting
- Computer literate (Word & Excel)
- Female, single, not more than 25 years old
- Hardworking and trustworthy

Apply in person and bring your transcript of records and other Credentials at:

TRANSMAN BROKERAGE & TRANSPORT CORPORATION
Rm. 211 Auro-Vir Plaza, 1695 Evangelista Street
Cor. Gen. Lacuna, Bangkal, Makati City
Look for **Ms. Arlene S. Cruz**

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
NATIONAL TOBACCO ADMINISTRATION
Scout Reyes corner Panay Avenue, Quezon City, Metro Manila
Tel. 372-3193 Fax No. 373-2095

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

The NATIONAL TOBACCO ADMINISTRATION (NTA), through its Pre-qualification, Bids and Awards Committee (PBAC), invites interested parties to pre-qualify and to bid for the JANITORIAL SERVICES OF THE NTA BUILDING AND ITS PREMISES.

The pre-qualification requirements are available for issuance to interested parties on **03 May 2002** at the General Services and Procurement Division, Administrative Department, 3rd Floor, NTA Building, Scout Reyes Street corner Panay Avenue, Quezon City, Metro Manila. The deadline for the submission of pre-qualification documents shall be on or before the close of office hours on **10 May 2002.**

Pre-qualified parties shall be notified thru formal letters, of the date and time of the public bidding. The instructions to Bidders and the Bid Forms will be issued only to qualified bidders upon payment of a non-refundable bidding fee of THREE THOUSAND PESOS (PhP3,000.00).

The NTA reserves the right to reject any or all bids or any part/s, thereof, without offering any reason, waive any defect/s contained in any of the bid's submitted and/or accept the offer most advantageous to the Agency.

(Sgd.) **MINDA C. GAPUZ**
Chairman, Pre-qualification, Bids and Awards Committee (PBAC)

(PDI - May 2, 2002)

AUCTION

On the instructions of ECW Joint Venture Incorporated due to the completion of a major project

MOBILE PLANT; CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT; DEMOUNTABLE ACCOMMODATION BLOCK; SURVEYORS INSTRUMENTS; LOOSE TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT; ETC.

IN OVER 300 LOTS INCLUDING: -

MOBILE PLANT - ISUZU U295 4x2 Tractor Head; ISUZU Garbage Truck; 40' Combo Trailer; Skid Steer Loader; etc.
CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT - INGERSOLL RAND 250 CFM Mobile Compressor; ADVANCE 50 KVA Generating Set; (5) Garbage Skips; TAE-YON 25 mm/45mm Cap. Bar Benders; Mobile Rebar Cutter; NILFISK Ride-On Floor Polisher
SURVEYORS INSTRUMENTS - SOKIA DT5AS/DT6 Theodolites; WILD NA2 Automatic Levels; CEICA Optical Plummet; ROTARY Laser Levels; etc.
LOOSE TOOLS & EQUIPMENT - DEWALT, HILTI TE905 / TE18-M / TE75 / TE704 / TE804; Hammer Drills; MAKITI, HITACHI Cut-Off Saws; MAKITA Angle Grinders; Asst'd. Pneumatic Tools; RIGID Pipe Cutters; Asst'd. Sockets / Wrenches; Asst'd. Hand Tools; Asst'd. Chain Blocks; Polishers; etc.
MISCELLANEOUS - Asst'd Hand Pallet Trucks; Asst'd Safety Ware; Asst'd G.I./PVC Pipe Fittings; Asst'd. Electrical Equipment; Submersible Pumps; Petrol Driven Fogging Machine; Drain Cleaning Equipment; Asst'd Window/Split Air Conditioners; ALLIMAK Elevator Spares; Scaffolding Clamps; 120 Person Cap. Three Storey Demountable Bunkhouse; Asst'd. Steel Tanks; etc.

AT: EEI CORPORATION
Majada Out, Calamba, Laguna
ON: Tuesday 07th May 2002 - 10:30am Prompt
ON VIEW: Monday 06th May 2002,
9:00am - 5:00pm & Morning of Sale Day
REGISTRATION: (Php20,000 upon registration)

HENRY BUTCHER
Industrial Auctioneers & Valuers

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E-mail: manila@henrybutcher.com
www.henrybutcher.com

KAGAWARAN NG KATARUNGAN
PANGASIWAAN SA PATALAAN NG LUPAIN
(LAND REGISTRATION AUTHORITY)
East Avenue cor. NIA Road
Quezon City

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

The Land Registration Authority (LRA) invites all interested parties to submit a Letter of Intent for the following services:

Type of Service	Manpower Requirement	Place of Deployment
Janitorial Services	Forty Five (45)	Nationwide
Security Services	Fifty Eight (58)	Nationwide

Eligibility Forms can be secured on May 3 - 8, 2002 from the BAC Secretariat at the Property Section, Lower Ground Floor, LRA Building, East Avenue corner NIA Road, Diliman, Quezon City, upon proper submission of the following Registration requirements:

a. Certified true copy of DTI or SEC certificate;
b. Certified true copy of Latest/Current business license;
c. Certified true copy of Taxpayer's Identification Number; and
d. Sworn statement of the prospective bidder that it is not "black listed" or barred from bidding by any government agency, office or corporation.

Deadline for the submission of Eligibility requirements is on May 15, 2002. Eligible parties shall be issued a complete set of Bid Documents on May 20 to May 21, 2002 upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P2,000.00.

Sealed Bids shall be received and opened at the Multi-Purpose Hall on the following dates and time:

Type of Service	Date	Time
1. Janitorial Services	June 03, 2002	10:00 a.m.
2. Security Services	June 03, 2002	2:00 p.m.

The BAC reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any required formality in the bids received, and accept such offer that may be considered advantageous to LRA.

The bidder shall bear all costs in the preparation of their bids and the government shall in no case be responsible or liable for their costs regardless of the outcome of the bidding process.

ATTY. ROSALINDA G. ALONZO, CESO V
Director II and Acting BAC Chairman

(PDI--April 25 & May 2, 2002)

For your Classified Ads requirements,
call our Classifieds Advertising
HOTLINES:

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CUBAO: 912-9008 to 11 (Aurora)
MAKATI: 892-5578; 811-4361; 811-4370
KALAW: 528-0213; 527-3342
MEGAMALL: 635-0219; 635-0220

Republic of the Philippines
Professional Regulation Commission
Manila

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND TO BID

The Professional Regulation Commission hereby invites interested parties to pre-qualify and to submit sealed bids for the printing of Test Booklets for the August 2002 Licensure Examination for Teachers.

Bid documents may be secured from the Bids and Awards Committee at the Office of the Administrative Officer, Ground Floor, PRC Building, P. Paredes St., Sampaloc, Manila beginning May 6-9, 2002.

Prospective bidders are required to submit the following pre-qualified requirements to the Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee on or before **May 15, 2002** at 10:00 a.m.

1. Company profile
2. SEC Registration
3. 2002 Business License/Permit
4. Latest Audited Financial Statement
5. List of Clients and References

Company and Plant visit shall be conducted from **May 20-24, 2002.**

Pre-bid Conference shall be held on **May 28, 2002** at 9:00 a.m. Failure to attend the pre-bid conference will be a ground for disqualification to participate in the bidding.

Submission and opening of technical and financial bids shall be on **June 11, 2002** at 10:00 a.m. The two (2) envelope system shall be adopted in the bidding.

All bid proposals must be accompanied by a bidder's bond equivalent to 2.5% of the total offer in the form of GSIS bond or Manager's Check.

The Professional Regulation Commission reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, to waive any required formality therein, and to accept, that which is most advantageous to the government. The Commission assumes no obligation to compensate or indemnify the bidder for any expense or loss that may be incurred in the preparation of bids nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

The Commission also reserves the right to confiscate the bid bond should the winning bidder refuse to accept the contract.

(Sgd.) **ANTONIETA FORTUNA-IBE**
Chairperson

(PDI - May 2 & 3, 2002)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Quezon City

INVITATION TO BID

The National Food Authority (NFA) wishes to announce that it will be conducting sealed Sale Through Market Determined Pricing (SMDP) among all interested buyers at NFA Central Office, Boardroom, 10/F, 101 Matimyas Bldg. E. Rodriguez Sr. Avenue, Quezon City, for the sale of local and imported refined sugar, particulars as follows:

WITHDRAWAL PERIOD : VOLUME (in Lkg.)
MAY : 125,000 Lkg.
JUNE : 125,000 Lkg.
JULY : 125,000 Lkg.
AUGUST : 125,000 Lkg.

COLOR (ICUMSA Units) max : 45 (Imported) 100 (Local)
INDICATIVE PRICE : P1,200 per Lkg.
BID BOND : 5% of the total price offer
PERFORMANCE BOND : 10% of the bid price in the form manager's/cashier's check or thru Irrevocable Letter of Credit
PRE-AUCTION DATES/TIME : 7 May 2002 (13 May 2002 in case of failure or for any balance of the first auction) 2:00 p.m.
AUCTION DATES : 9 may 2002 (15 May 2002 in case of failure or for any balance of the first auction) 2:00 p.m.

Bid documents will be available on **May 8, 2002** after the Pre-SMDP conference and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P2,000.00. Interested bidders may secure terms and conditions starting **May 7, 2002** from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at Directorate for Marketing Operations (Operations and Coordinations Division), 5th Floor, Matimyas Bldg., E. Rodriguez Sr. Avenue, Quezon City or may contact at Telephone No. 712-1572.

The National Food Authority reserves the right to reject any or all, waive any informality thereof and accept only such bids that are advantageous to the Agency.

(Sgd.) **ANTHONY R. A. ABAD**
Administrator

(PDI - May 1 & 2, 2002)

Republika ng Pilipinas
KAGAWARAN NG KAGALINGANG PANLIPUNAN AT PAGPAPAUNLAD
(DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT)
BATASAN PAMBANSA COMPLEX, CONSTITUTION HILLS
QUEZON CITY

PHILIPPINE 2000

Invitation for Bids

IFB NO. ECD-PMO/02-DSWD-001

1. The Government of the Republic of the Philippines has received a loan from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) towards the cost of the Early Childhood Development Project (Loan No. ADB-ADF 1607 PHI). It is intended that part of the proceeds of the loan will be applied to eligible payments under the contract for the Supply and Delivery of ECD Resource Center supplies and materials, and story books for Grade I pupils.

Package No.	Item
	A. ECD Resource Center Supplies & Materials
01	Children Story Books for age 1-2 years
02	Children Story Books for age 3-4 years
03	Children Story Books for age 5-6 years
04	Children Songs on CDs for ages 1 and above;
05	Children Stories on VCDs for ages 2 and above
	B. Storybooks for Grade I Pupils

2. The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders from member countries of ADB for the supply of the Goods for the purposes of the Project.
3. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information and secure the complete bidding documents, upon presentation of a letter of intent, from **2 to 11 May 2002** from Ms. Maricris Jacinto, BAC Secretariat, Property Division, 2nd Floor, DSWD, Batasan Pambansa Complex Constitution Hills, Quezon City with telephone numbers (632) 931-8161, (632) 931-8101 to 07 local 125, and fax number (632) 951-7116.
4. All sealed bids (complete with all requirements) must be accompanied by a bid security of not less than 2% of total bid price in the form of a bank guarantee, irrevocable standby letter of credit, cashier's check, certified check or cash, and must be delivered to the BAC Secretariat on or before 9:00 AM of **16 May 2002. Late bids shall be rejected.** Thereafter, bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend, venue of which shall be announced in the pre-bid conference.
5. The Department of Social Welfare and Development will not be responsible for any costs or expenses incurred by bidders in connection with the preparation or delivery of bids.
6. Prior to bid opening, a pre-bid conference will be held on **11 May 2002**, 8:30 AM at the Board Room 4th Floor, DSWD, Batasan Pambansa Complex, Constitution Hills, Quezon City.
7. The DSWD-BAC reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formality in the bids received and/or to accept the bid as may be considered most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) **RHODA F. YAP**
Assistant Secretary and BAC Chairperson

(PDI--Apr. 25 & May 2, 2002)

REPUBLIKA NG PILIPINAS
Pambansang Korporasyon Sa Elektrisidad
(NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION)

INVITATION FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

AD NO. PD 2002-13

Pre-Bid Conference : May 7, 2002 - 2:00 PM
Opening Date : May 16, 2002 - 9:00 AM
E-Bidding Date : May 21, 2002 - 9:00 AM

2002-13-01 SERVICES: STANDARD PENETRATION TESTS with LABORATORY & SLOPE STABILITY MAPPING & ANALYSIS RE-ENGINEERING GEOLOGICAL/ GEOTECHNICAL EVALUATION CONTRACT WORK for 101 TOWER SITES (North Luzon 230 KV Transmission System Upgrading Project covering Binga S/Y, Benguet Province to San Manuel S/S, Pangasinan.

Interested parties are invited to apply for eligibility and to submit sealed bids on the above to be opened publicly at the Sampaguita Room, Ground Floor Bldg. 2 NPC-OBC, Quezon Avenue cor. Agham Road, Diliman, Quezon City.

Eligibility forms and bidding documents are available on **May 2, 2002** upon payment of P50.00 which is non-refundable & presentation of supplier's number (DCE).

Issuance of eligibility forms and bidding documents mornings only, 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. For inquiries please call No. 921-2574. Last day of issuance of bidding documents **May 13, 2002.**

The Corporation reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any defect therein and accept the offer most advantageous to the Corporation.

MATERIALS MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT
NPC-OBC (Head Office)
Diliman, Quezon City

(PDI - May 2 & 3, 2002)

PHILIPPINE CARABAO CENTER
Department of Agriculture

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND TO BID

The Philippine Carabao Center (PCC), created under Republic Act No. 7307, an attached agency of the Department of Agriculture, is inviting interested Filipino Contractors or firms with a valid license issued by the Philippine Contractor Accreditations Board (PCAB) and classified as Category AAA, to apply for prequalification and submit bids for the following project at the PCC National Gene Pool and Headquarters at Science City of Muñoz, Nueva Ecija described below:

PCC RESEARCH AND TRAINING FACILITIES PHASE III

Both license and certificate must be unexpired before the prequalification, evaluation, after opening of bids and during the entire duration of the project.

The sequence of dates for carrying out this prequalification and bid shall be as follows:

1. Issuance of the Pre-C Form upon payment of non-refundable fee of P500.00, May 10 to 16, 2002 at the Office of the Executive Director. Incomplete applications shall not be accepted.
2. Deadline for submission of duly accomplished prequalification statement is on May 23, 2002.
3. Notice of prequalified and predisqualified contractors will be issued not later than June 24, 2002. Only prequalified contractors shall be invited to submit proposals.
4. Issuance of Bid-Tender Forms, Plans Specification and Requirement Forms, June 25 to 28, 2002 at the Office of the Executive Director, upon payment of P1,500.00 which amount is non-refundable.
5. Pre-Bidding conference is scheduled at 10:00 A.M. on **August 14, 2002** at the Office of the Executive Director, 5th Floor, DCIEC Building, NIA Compound, EDSA, Quezon City.
6. Submission of duly accomplished bid-tender and supplemental documents shall not be later than 10:00 A.M. on **August 28, 2002**, at the Office of the Executive Director, 5th Floor, DCIEC Building, NIA Compound, EDSA, Quezon City after which opening of bids will be done immediately.

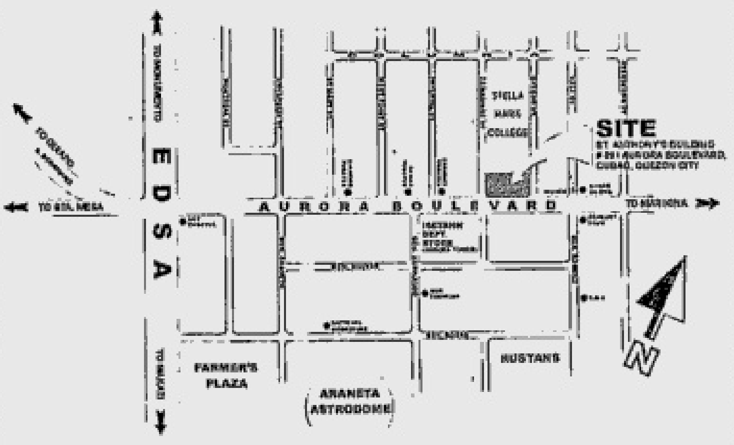
All particulars relative to the prequalification, bid bond, pre-bid conference, evaluation and award of contract shall be governed by the provisions of P.D. 1594 and its implementing rules and regulations as amended.

The Philippine Carabao Center reserves the right to reject any or all proposals or waive any defect or required formality therein and to award the project to the proponent whose proposal is most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) LIBERTADO C. CRUZ
Chairman
Prequalifications, Bids & Awards Committee

(PDI - May 1, 2 & 3, 2002)

INQUIRER CLASSIFIEDS



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For inquiries, please call
912-9008 to **11**

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OBITUARIES

SEVERINA T. DELA CRUZ MADULID

Died in the Grace of our Lord
on April 29, 2002 at the age of 88.

Her bereaved family, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at Our Lady of Loreto Mortuary, Bustillos Street, Sampaloc, Manila.

There will be a Mass at 8:30 o'clock in the morning on Saturday, May 4, 2002, after the Mass interment shall follow at the Manila North Cemetery.

RAFAEL A. MENDIOLA

Peacefully joined our Lord on April 30, 2002
at the age of 77.

He is survived by his wife **Esther**; children **Peth** and **PJ Ayag; Mhanette** and **Bong Martinez; Gaye** and **Gichin Ocuaman; John** and **Joy Mendiola**; grandchildren **Caiah, Carlos** and **Cheese Martinez; Audrey** and **Dylan Ayag**; and **Gabe Ocuaman.**

His family and relatives request the pious readers to offer a prayer for the eternal repose of his soul.

His mortal remains lie in state at San Felipe Neri Church, Mandaluyong City. Interment will be at San Felipe Neri Cemetery, Mandaluyong City on May 5, 2002 at 2 p.m.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

INQUIRER OBITUARIES

• DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT • MESSAGE OF THANKS • DEATH ANNIVERSARY • REQUIEMS •

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate
❷ Any Identification document (I.D.)

WE ACCEPT CREDIT CARDS
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Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

DR. ARSENIO C. MENDOZA

who passed away in the Grace of our Lord on March 20, 2002

wish to express our heartfelt gratitude and sincerest appreciation to all those who offered Masses and prayers, sent flowers and messages of sympathy and who in countless ways condoled with and comforted us in our time of bereavement.

Annette Ma. Baldric Feria-Magas

Died on April 30, 2002 at the age of 39.

Claret Chapel, Quezon City

Cremation will be on May 4, 2002, 2:00 p.m. at the La Funeraria Paz Crematory, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

ANTONIO G. MALLARI

Born on June 13, 1930

Peacefully joined our Creator
on April 30, 2002 at the age of 71.

His wife **Zenaida F. Mallari**; loving children **Marlon** and **Boogie, Mitch** (†), **Ed** and **Maris, Mervin** and **Marienella, Jolly** and **Deng, Myco** and **Coco, Mico, Ever** and **Nani, Nano** and **Michelle**; and his grandchildren request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Funeraria Enriquez, F. Tañedo St., Tarlac City.

Interment will be at the Eternal Memorial Park, San Sebastian Village, Tarlac City tomorrow, Friday, May 3, 2002 after the 8:30 a.m. Mass at the San Sebastian Cathedral.

ATTY. PROSPERO B. SEMANA

Assistant City Prosecutor
Quezon City

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on April 30, 2002 at the age of 52.

His remains lie in state at the Christ the King Chapel, Green Meadows, Quezon City, where a Holy Mass will be offered, in thanksgiving for his life and work at 9:00 a.m, on Saturday, May 4, 2002, after which, his body will be interred at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City.

The bereaved family expresses deep gratitude to all concerned for prayers and other offerings made.

ELISEA P. TIZON

June 23 1912 - April 30, 2002

Peacefully joined our Creator at the age of 89.

Her son **Orlando T. Gan**; daughter-in-law **Amelita**; grandchildren **Millicent, Clarence Marie, Fausto Ezzard IV**; grandson-in-law **Donald**; and great grandchildren **Kiefer** and **Dawson**, request the pious readers to say a prayer for the repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels, Sucat, Parañaque.

Funeral Mass will be on Saturday, May 4, 2002, 9:00 a.m. followed by Cremation service at 11:00 a.m. at the Manila Memorial Park, Parañaque City.

> Eye has not seen, ear has not heard, nor has it so much as dawned on man what God has prepared for those who love Him.
>
> *I Corinthians 2:9*

MOTORING

Editor **Cesar D. Mangawang**

EFFECT OF NEW EXCISE TAX SCHEME

Van, AUV, pickup to cost as much as P97,000 more

By Tessa R. Salazar

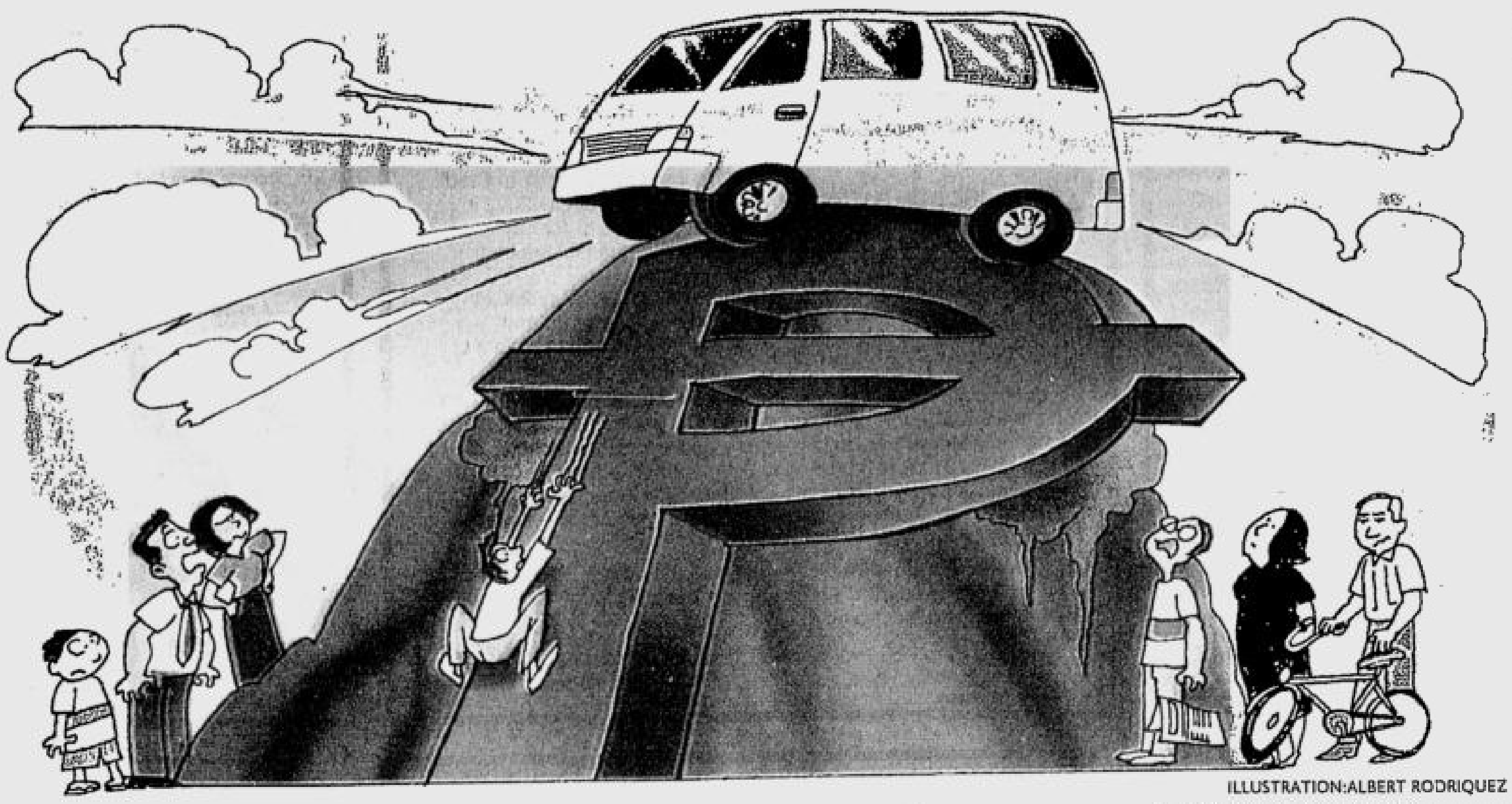

ILLUSTRATION:ALBERT RODRIQUEZ

THE NEW tax scheme being proposed by the government could mean only one thing: Your dream to have a better-looking all-purpose vehicle for your family's small-scale business or to reward yourself after a hard day's work here or abroad could remain only a dream. That is if the government pushes with its plan to slap the new tax scheme on commercial vehicles.

Your average Asian utility vehicle that you use for shuttle service or for your small business could cost P24,000 to P36,000 more; your ever-reliable pickup for farming or entrepreneurial activities, P67,000 more; and your family van, P97,000 more.

That dreamed-of AUV such as the Revo SR Automatic Transmission could cost P36,000 more, the Adventure Sport would be P35,000 more expensive, and your Crosswind XTO could cost P31,000 more.

This will be the effect of the government's value-based excise tax on commercial vehicles as the Truck Manufacturers Association, the organization that represents the commercial vehicle issues of its members, revealed to the INQUIRER.

The value-based scheme proposed by the government for commercial vehicles such as the AUVs, pickups and light commercial vehicles below P600,000 would be slapped 3 percent tax from the current zero rate. Vehicles that reach P600,001 to P1 million would have 15 percent excise tax; P1,000,001 to P2 million would have 25 percent tax while above P2 million would have 100 percent excise tax.

Negative impact

AUVs, pickups and vans—mainly used by small to medium enterprises, small entrepreneurs as taxis, shuttles and those using pickups as a vehicle that doubles as a family and business vehicle in one, will see a significant increase in the vehicle purchase prices, said TMA president Elizabeth Lee.

Lee said the proposed value-based excise taxation scheme by the government would not only have a negative impact on the commercial vehicle segment in terms of declining sales, but more important on the purchase price of these vehicles among the local buyers. The tax, she said, will result in higher prices for commercial vehicles.

Lee stressed that the industry is agreeable to legislative changes on the current excise tax system that promotes sales, supports industry growth and exports. She added, however, that the government should carefully study its proposals first.

The TMA represents the commercial vehicle segment that captured 68 percent of overall vehicle sales. The passenger car segment, meanwhile, has a 32-percent market share.

In the CV segment, AUVs represent a 51-percent share of the CV sales. Light commercial vehicles such as pickups, vans and sports utility vehicles represent about 42 percent (Lee stressed that among the LCV models, pickups and vans represent over 76 percent).

Light trucks represent about 5 percent and heavy trucks and buses represent about 2 percent of the CV market.

Lee said the auto industry is one of the main engines of the Philippine economy. "It is important to understand and realize the impact of any change in the tax structure as this will affect not only the overall auto industry but the consumers and the economy as a whole."

"The bestseller AUVs exclusively popular to the Filipino will surely be hurt by the new tax scheme. An average Filipino's chances of acquiring an AUV will be less," said Myrna Gonzales, Isuzu Philippines' senior manager for corporate affairs.

Secondhand vehicles

Meanwhile, Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines Inc. (Campi) president Vicente Mills Jr. said in a statement that the proposed price and value based system being favored by the Department of Finance does not protect the consumer from the multiplier effects of currency fluctuation and devaluations.

"The industry is looking for protection from the loopholes such as those being abused by secondhand vehicle importers and auctioneers," he said.

Mills added that the immediate negative impact of price increase across all models and types of vehicles is intensified by the free flow of secondhand passenger cars, SUVs and light commercial vehicles. These secondhand vehicles, he stressed, have very negligible contribution on the revenue generation efforts of the government but have very devastating effects on the survival of the labor-intensive and tax-paying formal automotive industry.

Campi also said the price-based system is very vulnerable to even the slightest change in the economic environment, especially currency exchange rates, while stable and predictable rate structures will provide manufacturers solid basis for planning purposes.

"Even at a fixed rate of 10 percent on a P600,000 to P1-million vehicle manufactured at a P50-to-$1 exchange rate is no longer the same if the exchange rate will run to a high of P75 to a US dollar in terms of affordability because what used to cost only P600,000 will be pushed to the higher tax bracket," he said. Using an engine size valuation regardless of the fluctuation in the exchange rate, the basic tax levy will remain the same, he added.

The New Nissan Serena Q-RV

Lunch with clients

Mobile office

Road trip to Ilocos

Camp out at the beach

Hop in. Whether it's a quick drive to the office or an unplanned weekend escape with friends, its versatility lets you do what you want every time. With advanced and luxurious features that give you the safest, smoothest and a most quiet ride, the new Nissan Serena Q-RV is a total performer all the way. Finally, a recreational vehicle that considers the needs of every passenger. From its sporty, European-style look to its flexible seating arrangements to its Mobile VCD Entertainment System, **the new Nissan Serena Q-RV might just deliver the impossible: make everyone happy — all at once.**

Mobile VCD Entertainment System

Rear Privacy Glass

Dual side doors

Three-piece Rear Back-up Sensor

SR20DE Engine Sophisticated and Optimized Fuel Injection System

Anti-Lock Brake System(ABS) with Electronic Brake Force Distribution

Airbag SRS

Complex Surface Reflector Headlamps

Leather Steering Wheel

- Nissan Motor Philippines Inc. reserves the right to alter specifications on actual model without prior notice.
- Model featured is Nissan Serena Q-RV R Limited 2.0 -1 Automatic Transmission.
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Nissan Motor Philippines, Inc.

Ban 'kuliglig' and tricycles now

FULL TANK

Al Mendoza

I CAN'T understand why the government continues to take for granted the lives of our people.

Our life has become as cheap as Magnolia chicken?

I say this again in light of the recent accident that saw Sen. Nene Pimentel cheat death.

Last week, Pimentel's Mitsubishi Pajero hit a "*kuliglig*," the hand tractor that freely travels the highways of Ilocandia and Central Luzon with impunity.

Except for a cut in his lip, Pimentel escaped serious injuries and was able to deliver his speech at the Central Luzon State University as guest in a biotechnology forum. Pimentel's driver was also not hurt.

But not the driver and two passengers of the "*kuliglig*." They were brought to a local hospital. Pimentel's Pajero, which also hit an Isuzu Elf truck, was severely damaged, according to our correspondent, Anselmo Roque.

* * *

The "*kuliglig*," a slow-moving vehicle, has become part and parcel of highway life in the North.

Every time I go home to my home province of Pangasinan, I encounter the "*kuliglig*" at the Romulo Highway beginning almost at the Tarlac junction. In fact, I'm now more afraid of it than vehicles having four tires.

The reason is obvious: the "*kuliglig*" is hard to drive as it is not built for highway driving. It is basically for farm use.

It does not have side mirrors so that the driver cannot really see vehicles coming from both sides. It does not have a rear-view mirror so that the driver cannot see an approaching vehicle from behind.

Each time you overtake a "*kuliglig*," you need to slow down as it might suddenly swerve and block your path. I've seen it happen many times. My own car was once a victim of the "*kuliglig's*" unpredictability.

Like the tricycle, the "*kuliglig*" is actually banned from highway travel. Why the authorities do not enforce the law boggles the mind.

Only last Friday, 11 were killed and six others hurt when a bus collided with a jeepney in Bambang, Nueva Vizcaya.

The accident happened after the jeepney tried to avoid a "*kuliglig*."

* * *

The unveiling recently of the New Nissan Serena Q-RV is a revolutionary move by Nissan Motor Philippines Inc. Not known to produce vans, NMPI has stunned the automotive industry with its latest baby.

"Nissan is very proud of the Serena Q-RV in terms of performance, its flexible cabin space, luxurious interiors and sturdy modern look," said Jack Wu, NMPI president. "The aim is to give the Filipino consumers an advanced, luxurious, comfortable and versatile recreational vehicle in comparison with the commonly used utility vehicles in the market today."

The New Nissan Serena Q-RV, a spacious 10-seater, sells at P960,000 (manual) and P1,160,000 (automatic, equipped with a mobile VCD entertainment system, among other amenities).

I love vans as much as I love Volvos. When the moolah finally comes pouring in (oh, lotto, when will I hit you?), I'll buy one each.

* * *

Congratulations to Toyota Bel-Air, whose new building will be blessed and inaugurated tomorrow at 5 in the afternoon. The new Toyota building is located at Ayala corner Metropolitan Avenue, Makati City. Dress code: business attire.

If my tailor finishes my suit, I'll be there.

Ciao!

* * *

QUOTE ME. Do you know that Michael Schumacher, who races his Ferrari at an average 205kph during a Formula 1 race, rarely drives beyond 140 km an hour on any highway in the world?

Outpacing the best of the rest

Text and photos by Charles E. Buban

MOTORBIKES have grown greatly popular in the countryside over the last several decades that they can be seen virtually anywhere—being used for everything from commuting to sports riding. Because of their utility and affordability, they have become so popular in the countryside much like the way we regard AUVs here in Metro Manila.

About two weeks ago I was in Puerto Princesa City, Palawan, to witness the introduction of SC Kymco's newest motorbike model in the island. A launch of this sort is much anticipated since almost everybody here owns a motorbike and a new model would definitely spur the public's interest.

But more than the launch itself, what the Palaweños were even more excited about was the drag race that was going to happen in the afternoon. SC Kymco coordinated with its Palawan distributor Emcor to organize a drag race that will pit the mopeds of major competitors against its latest model, the Spike 125.

Says SC Kymco vice president for operations Gilbert Limjoco: "The idea here is to show the people how the Spike 125 performs against the rest. In terms of quality and performance, I believe the Spike 125 has all the best features so much so that we are willing to place our bets on it."

THIS SPIKE 125 is an environment-friendly dual-purpose moped for city and off-road riding.

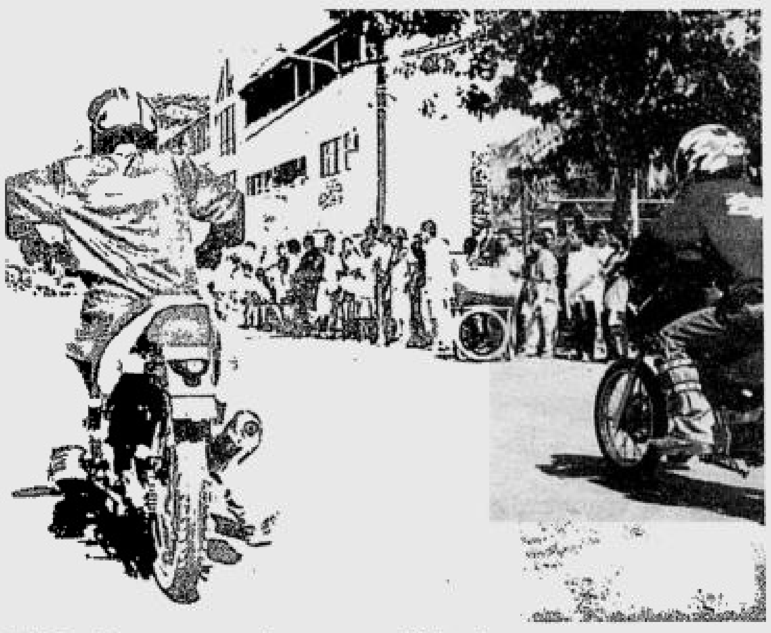
The race

The race venue was the straight and leveled Rizal Avenue (the road going to the airport). A portion of the road was closed momentarily to traffic as safety markers were placed to minimize any untoward incident and protect both riders and spectators.

The race mechanics was simple: any non-SC Kymco moped or scooter with the same or much lower displacement with the Spike 125 could join in the quarter-mile race. Even 2-stroke engines may participate. Just as in any form of motorcycle racing, the aim basically was to accelerate earlier and brake later than the next participant.

Two riders competed in every qualifying heat. Winners of each heat challenged one another until one rider emerged as the champion receiving a trophy and P5,000 cash prize.

The final round would give the champion a chance to challenge the Spike 125 in the same race. But there's a catch: If he chooses to dare and beat the Spike 125, he could double his take-home prize to P10,000. If he loses, he forfeits his P5,000 and go home with only a trophy plus a consolation prize of P1,000.



TWO riders compete in every qualifying heat

Eventual race winner Wendel Mangahas of Palawan Eagle played safe and opted instead to hold on to his P5,000 prize and accepted an additional P1,000 re~~ward for just racing with the~~ Spike 125 sans the double your prize deal.

Mangahas was lucky since he lost the race with the Spike 125 but went home with a trophy and a total of P6,000 cash prize. "It was a close race but the Spike was indeed a powerful machine," notes Mangahas who was an experienced rider himself, having won several bike races around Palawan.

"The drag race is a better way to see how the motorbike performs without the driver expertise factor dictating much on the outcome of the race. As a matter of fact, we have already done a similar race in Taytay, Rizal, where we have proven also the mettle of the Spike 125 when pitted against the rest of the mopeds," explains Limjoco.

Nothing secret

Boasting a high-kicking 125 cc, 4-stroke engine, the Spike 125 is a class of its own. Its notable advantages include a durable mono-shock rear suspension, modern CDI ignition and a reliable 240 mm disk brake. "This newest product from SC Kymco is an environment-friendly dual-purpose moped for city and off-road riding," explains Rommel Santos, regional sales manager for Metro Manila and Luzon area.

The Spike 125 aims to penetrate the moped market mostly dominated by 90 to 110 cc displacement engines. This market is among the fastest-growing segments in the motorbike industry whose popularity has grown tremendously among the younger generations.

"You could see a lot of these people riding this type of motorbike during weekends," says Santos. "With a Spike 125, we are giving this market a new choice and at a very competitive price. And like the way it has performed in several drag races, the Spike 125 is a mean machine whose quality and power you can pit against the big names in its class."

GRIM EXCISE TAX PLAN

BMW still hopes to break into mainstream

By Tessa R. Salazar

THE SALES team is responsible for making PGA Cars Inc. the top-selling authorized BMW dealer with the highest number of units sold for this year's first quarter. It is led by company president Miguel Coyiuto, GM Miguelito Jose and sales managers Mike Pamintuan and Andy Maribao.

A DOUBLE-DIGIT first quarter increase in sales would have been impressive and a cause for celebration, but somehow there's a cloud of apprehension over at BMW Philippines Corporation. That ominous storm cloud takes the form of the progressive excise taxation scheme.

BMW, the first European automotive company to pour in direct investment in the Philippines through a local subsidiary—the first luxury carmaker to do so in the country—believes it could drop its chances of getting into the mainstream car market segment if the proposed excise taxation scheme pushes through.

A pensive BMW Philippines president Mark Gilbert recently expressed this concern during a roundtable discussion at the BMW office in Makati.

Gilbert told the motoring press that the company was "very pleased" with its performance as it is now ahead in sales among the other luxury car manufacturers in the first quarter of 2002. Gilbert added, however, that BMW Philippines hopes it continues the trend despite the impending "detrimental changes in the excise tax structure.

"Unfortunately, further increases in taxation in the premium market segment will severely affect not just BMW business but the business of other premium automobile manufacturers as well," he said.

He added: "While an overhaul of the excise tax structure is welcome, a severe change that affects one sector of the industry more than the other should be discouraged. Furthermore, any change should reward the formal market and discourage the informal market," Gilbert said.

He added that BMW Philippines had exerted efforts to accomplish this result with its dealer network and had invested heavily to deliver new standards in the car buying experience.

Two hundred ten BMW vehicles were delivered to its customers, representing a 67-percent share of the total automobiles sold in the premium market segment. Citing the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines Inc., its first quarter report showed that sales rose by 85.84 percent over the same period last year. Its March 2002 sales, meanwhile, increased by 12.1 percent—from 74 units compared to last month's 66 units.

BMW says that its 3 series continues to be the best-selling model range, acquiring more than 70 percent of this year's 2002 first quarter sales. Sales of the 5 series, added BMW, have also increased, besting sales volumes for the same period last year.

The Philippines is the base of its fifth sales subsidiary in Asia after Japan, Korea, Thailand and Indonesia. Its entry in the local market is part of BMW's global strategy.

Winners of Trans Sport Show 2002 known

THE COUNTRY'S premier motoring event, Trans Sport Show 2002 ended April 14, with another record visitor attendance.

Winners for the Open Class Competition were announced the previous day. The Trans Sport Show Cup—Best of Show award went to the 1949 MG-TC roadster entry of noted car restorer Ben Silvestre. The car also won first place in the vintage category and best interior in the non-Asian category. The other major winner this year is the 1996 Honda V-Tec of Hannah Auto Center that won the Reserve Best of Show and also the Best in Paint

Ms Trans Sport Show 2002 went to Cecile de Castro of Caltex Havoline.

For the different categories, the list of winners are as follows:

- Most Outstanding Booth—Ford Philippines
- Most Outstanding Pavilion—Diamond Motors/Union Motors
- Newcomer's Award—Reibet Autoshoppe
- Most Outstanding Car Display—Reibet Autoshoppe
- Best Interior (Asian)—1996 Honda V-Tec/Hannah Auto Center Inc.
- Best Interior (Non-Asian)—1949 MGTC/Ben Silvestre Restoration
- Best Engine Compartment—1949 MGTC/Ben Silvestre Restoration
- Best Engine Display—2000 Honda SIR/Reibet Autoshoppe
- Best Body Kit (Asian)—2001 Toyota Corolla Altis/Bandila Trading
- Best Body Kit (Non-Asian)—1990 Mercedes-Benz 300E/Options Unlimited
- 1st Place, Japanese Millennium Mode I-2000 Honda SIR/Reibet Autoshoppe
- 1st Place European Contemporary Stock—2001 Mercedes-Benz CLK 230/Autoline Motorsports
- 1st Place, European Contemporary Modified—1990 Mercedes-Benz 124 300E/Options Unlimited
- 1st Place, Contemporary Sports—1998 Porsche Carrera Coupé/L&C Motors
- 1st Place, Japanese 4-DR Stock (1996-1999)—1996 Honda V-Tec/Hannah Auto Center, Inc.
- 1st Place, Japanese 4-DR Modified (1996-1949)—1996 Honda Civic SIR/Genspeed

Painting Technology:

- 1st Place, Japanese 4-DR Stock (up to 1995)—1990 Toyota Corolla/Outkast Motorworks
- 1st Place, Japanese 4-DR Pro Modified (up to 1995)—1994 Honda Civic Esi/Paint Tricks
- 1st Place, Japanese 2 DR Stock—1995 Honda Del Sol/PPG Autosalon
- 1st Place, Japanese 2-DR Pro Modified—1993 Honda Esi Hatchback/V-Specs Auto

Detailing:

- 1st Place, Custom Classic—1964 Chevrolet Nova/Streetglow Autowerks
- 1st Place, Post Classic Modified—1989 Rover Mini Cooper/Genspeed
- 1st Place, Classic—1979 MGB/Allen Isidro Autobody Collision
- 1st Place Vintage—1949 MGTC/Ben Silvestre Restoration

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2001 318iA, red on black fabric. A well equipped 3 Series for 1.57 M.

2001 318iA, green on black fabric. Another well equipped 3 Series for 1.55M.

2001 316iA, red on black fabric. A very nice E46 for just 1.23M.

Prestige Cars Makati
Tel. Nos. 892-8127 to 29
The Ultimate Driving Machine

Sales of Q-RV Serena reach monthly target in 1 week

By Tessa R. Salazar

Q-RV Serena

THE DRIVE quality of a sedan, a size big enough to load a family of 10 and then some bulky stuff, but not too big for a single person to feel he or she is driving a vehicle occupying too much road space. That's how Nissan Motor Philippines Inc. markets its latest commercial vehicle entry in the country.

Just a week after NMPI president Jack Wu expressed his optimism that the Filipino market would accept the Q-RV warmly and set a 50-unit target for the month, the unit delivery for the Q-RV has already reached the 80 mark. This was revealed by Tonette Lee, senior manager for product and marketing.

Q-RV banners the NMPI's entry as the market shifts to commercial vehicles. Commercial vehicles—which include vans, Asian utility vehicles, pickups, light trucks and sports utility vehicles—corner the lion share of the automotive industry at 68 percent.

"We hope the Q-RV helps sustain the motorists' increasing interest in our lineup of products as well as increase our market share," said Lee.

Q-RV's flexible seating arrangements include long slide seats that glide forward and backward. These could be flattened out or folded up completely.

The new Nissan Serena Q-RVR limited is fitted with signature chrome vertical grille design. It has a large Complex Surface Reflector headlamp for brighter illumination. It has larger bumper and side protector that adds to a shapelier body design.

It has a mobile entertainment system, twin sliding doors, rear backup sensors and multiple storage places. The mobile entertainment system has a 6 CD/VCD changer and a flip down LCD screen.

The NMPI also boasts of Q-RV's front engine that is designed to further reduce noise and vibration. It also uses a trailing arm with multilink suspension and a stabilizer bar for easier handling and stability.

Serena Q-RV models are QRVU manual transmission sold at P960,000 and QRVR Limited, that is automatic transmission with airbags SRS, ABS and mobile VCD entertainment system at P1,160,000.

New LTO field office opens

By Charles Buban

RESIDENTS along the automotive row of Chino Roces Avenue (formerly Pasong Tamo Extension) in Makati City will now have an easier time renewing their vehicle registration. In fact, upon completion of the processing, the registration along with the sticker will be delivered right at their doorstep free of charge.

Last month, a new outreach branch of the Land Transportation Office opened inside the 2,700-square-meter Auto Mall compound near the Lumbang Street gate of Dasmariñas Village. It will serve the six exclusive villages located in the area—Forbes Park, Dasmariñas, Urdaneta, San Lorenzo, Magallanes and Bel-Air. Some 20,000 vehicle units are estimated to come from these villages.

"We want to bring the services closer to the people. This outreach field office is just the first of the several branches the LTO hopes to create with the help of the private sector," said LTO chief Roberto Lastimoso.

The outreach branch will help decongest the volume of applicants who usually go to the LTO main office beside the city hall in J.P. Rizal. "We want to deliver a more efficient and prompt service so we started with the computerization of our system and recently, this new field office," explained Lastimoso.

The LTO also noted the traffic volume along Chino Roces Avenue and the busy schedule of the residents near the area, so it decided to open the outreach branch only during weekends when traffic is light and residents are available to process their papers.

The adjustment is part of the accommodations the LTO is giving the residents in the area apart from a free home delivery of their approved registration and sticker.

Vehicle smoke emission testing by the Department of Transportation and Communication and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources will also be provided free of charge, courtesy of Automall, a vehicle service center and tire dealer. The smoke emission testing is one of the requirements set by the LTO for car registration.

The outreach branch was made possible after the residents in the area pledged to support LTO by providing an office space which will be maintained by Automall and village residents.

HONDA CR-V

CR-V and Q-RV: Maximizing space

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

NEXT to "X" (as in BMW X5, Jaguar X-Type and Subaru WRX), the letter "V" seems to be the vogue in automotive insignia—as in Honda CR-V and Nissan Serena Q-RV.

Coincidentally, the all-new Q-RV (Quality Recreational Vehicle?) and CR-V (Comfortable Runabout Vehicle) were launched one after the other in Makati on Tuesday and Wednesday last week. While the Q-RV is a minivan and the CR-V is an almost (but not quite) AUV-priced SUV, both vehicles ingeniously maximize interior cabin space.

Both Nissan Motor Philippines Inc. and Honda Cars Philippines Inc. claim that their new vehicles have flexible seating arrangements capable of accommodating up to 10 persons, including the driver. The Q-RV has three rows of seats (two bucket seats up front, two bench seats in the middle plus two side foldable seats facing each other in the back), likewise the CR-V (a three-seater in front, a second row bench seat and a low, shorter third row bench seat.)

In the Q-RV, long slide railing allows the second and third rows of seats to be slid forward or backward as well as flipped flat or folded up completely. In the CR-V, the second row seat is a 60/40 reclining/fold and tumble type that can be stowed without removing the headrests and the third row seat can be folded or removed entirely to increase cargo space.

Why, you may ask, am I comparing seating arrangements of the Q-RV and the CR-V? Isn't that like comparing apples and oranges, since the Q-RV is a compact van/minivan while the CR-V is a compact sport utility vehicle price-tagged like an upscale Asian utility vehicle?

If you define an SUV as a sporty-looking vehicle with high ground clearance, dual airbags, anti-lock braking system (ABS) and a rear door-mounted spare tire carrier, then the 2002 CR-V is an SUV. But if 4-wheel-drive, whether full-time or part-time (or Real Time 4WD, as Honda calls it), is part of your bill of particulars for an SUV, then this second-generation CR-V, Philippine version, is no SUV.

But neither is it an AUV. No AUV in existence, no matter how upscale, has a VTEC engine, dual airbags, ABS with electronic brake-force distribution (EBD), 4-wheel disc brakes and catalytic converter—all of which the new CR-V has and which the old CR-V didn't have except for the airbags.

The new CR-V is not a passenger car either, since it can seat 10 people. That leaves only one category to which it can belong: the minivan, which is exactly what the Nissan Serena Q-RV is. But I wouldn't go to the extent of calling the new CR-V a minivan. It's more like a state-of-the-art station wagon that has the looks of a compact SUV, the price tag of a top-of-the-line AUV and the versatile roominess of a minivan.

It appears that to qualify for the excise tax exemption currently enjoyed by AUVs, Honda gave up the first generation CR-V's 4WD component, replaced the center console box with a seat to accommodate another passenger between the driver and the front seat passenger and installed a detachable third row bench seat on top of the cargo area to accommodate three more passengers. Thus the five-passenger seating capacity of the original CR-V was expanded to 10, including driver. As a result, Honda was able to lower the new CR-V's SRP (suggested retail price) to P899,000 for the manual transmission model and P959,000 for the automatic.

But CR-V fans who yearn for a new 4x4 model need not fret. An industry source tells me that if enough of a clamor is created for it, Honda will produce a Real Time 4WD CR-V SUV sometime this year.

The Nissan Serena Q-RV, despite its P1,160,000 SRP, looks like a sure winner, thanks to its perfect timing. The Q-RV, which is smaller than the Kia Carnival, Hyundai Starex and Chevrolet Venture, fills in the void left by the Mitsubishi Space Wagon, which is no longer assembled and the Chevrolet (Opel) Zafira, which has been sold out. There is an unsatisfied demand for comfortable, fully loaded compact minivans and the eminently equipped Q-RV has arrived just in time to meet that demand.

* * *

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: Despite the cost of living, have you noticed how it remains so popular?

* * *

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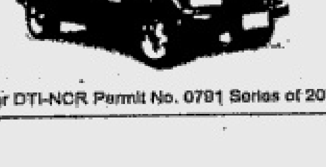

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0791 Series of 2002

UAL chief exec to step down

CHICAGO—United Airlines parent UAL Corp. said on Tuesday that its interim chief executive, brought on board late last year after unions demanded his predecessor to resign, was also stepping down just as the carrier tried to forge a concession deal with workers.

Chief executive Jack Creighton was known to be a temporary leader at the No. 2 US airline, but some industry observers said the timing was still surprising.

Creighton was named CEO in October, after former CEO James Goodwin sent a letter to employees saying the airline would perish unless financial losses stopped. Despite being hand-picked by the unions, which had a seat on UAL's board, Goodwin was forced to resign after a public relations disaster ensued and employees complained bitterly.

The announcement of Creighton's resignation comes at a critical juncture for the carrier, which has lost billions in the wake of the Sept. 11 attacks on New York and Washington, which involved two of its planes. The first-quarter net loss was $510 million, on top of a record $2.1-billion loss posted for 2001, an aviation history record.

Airlines, in general, are still amassing huge shortfalls as demand for air traffic, particularly from business travelers, remains below year-ago levels.

"I was brought in for the short term to stabilize United and improve the relationship between management and employees," Creighton said. "We have made some important strides in each of these areas, and I will continue to focus on those priorities as we search for my replacement." ***Reuters***

Ebbers out as WorldCom chief

CLINTON, Miss.—Bernard Ebbers, who built WorldCom Inc. into a global telecommunications giant, has resigned as president and chief executive amid a steep decline in the company's fortunes and an SEC investigation of its finances.

WorldCom said Tuesday that John Sidgmore, vice chair since 1996, would succeed Ebbers in both positions. Bert Roberts remains as chair.

Ebbers, who resigned Monday, moved out of his office in Clinton over the weekend. He said he was asked to step down by the board.

"It was a good decision for the board. WorldCom's had some struggles," Ebbers told WLBT-TV in Jackson. He said he had 15 "fabulous" years leading the company but called the last two years "challenging."

Sidgmore said he and others on the management team grew frustrated in recent months as WorldCom stock tumbled to lows not seen in a decade.

"My belief is if we can re-energize the management team and put our assets to work in a more focused way around the world, we really believe we can turn this company into a growth story again," Sidgmore said in a conference call with analysts Tuesday.

Ebbers said he and WorldCom would remain in Mississippi, and that Sidgmore asked him to stay on as a consultant.

"I'm sure he will use me in a variety of activities. Not day-by-day operations," he told WAPT-TV.

WorldCom, a darling of Wall Street a few years ago, has seen investors turn against it in recent months amid concerns about the company's $28 billion in debt and the Securities and Exchange Commission investigation of its lending and accounting practices.

In March, two WorldCom stockholders sued the company's board over $375 million in loans that the company made to Ebbers. Ebbers said he had enough personal assets to cover the loans.

Its long-distance business, the United States' second largest after AT&T Corp., has also come under pressure from industry price discounting.

On Thursday, WorldCom reported that first-quarter profits for the company's core businesses plunged 66 percent as corporate clients reduced spending.

"Business conditions remain as challenging as ever, but it seems as if Bernie had been sort of a lightning rod in terms of drawing attention," said David Burks, an analyst with JJB Hilliard, WL Lyons in Louisville, Ky. "Maybe his departure lessens some of the negative publicity surrounding the company."

Ebbers, a former high school basketball coach, built WorldCom up from a small long-distance company through more than 60 acquisitions over the past 15 years. The rapid growth was stopped dead in its tracks in 2000 when federal and European regulators blocked WorldCom's $129-billion merger with Sprint Corp., citing competition concerns.

In April, the company said it was eliminating 3,700 jobs in the United States, or about 4.4 percent of its global work force. ***AP***

Canadian economy to grow 3.5%-4.5% in first half of 2002

OTTAWA, Canada—The Canadian economy will grow at a rate of between 3.5 percent and 4.5 percent in the first half of this year, Bank of Canada Governor David Dodge said Tuesday.

Talking to the Senate banking committee, Dodge said that with the world economy strengthening, "here in Canada a robust recovery appears to be underway."

The surge in economic growth in the first half of the year "will continue to expand in the second half of the year and in 2003," said Dodge.

Despite the economic growth and a jump in new jobs, Dodge said he expected core inflation, which excluded energy prices, to hold steady at around 2 percent through the end of the year.

Even with fluctuating oil and natural gas prices, the overall consumer price index was also expected to be around 2 percent by the end of 2003.

Hinting that the central bank might continue to increase slowly its base interest rates to stop the economy from overheating, Dodge said: "It is possible that some of the recent strength in spending on consumer durables was borrowed from the future."

He continued: "We want to ensure that inflation stays close to the target (of one to 3 percent) so that, over the medium term, our economy can continue to grow at full capacity."

But he also promised no drastic action which could upset the markets or consumer confidence. ***AFP***

Japan's new auto sales decline 2.7%

TOKYO—Japan's new vehicle sales in April fell 2.7 percent year-on-year to 265,454 units, marking the eighth straight monthly decline and a two-year low, an industry association said Wednesday.

"As before the continuing slump in the economy is affecting sales of automobiles," said a spokesperson for the Japan Automobile Dealers Association.

Sales fell 50 percent from a month earlier to a level below that set in April 2000 of 268,259 units.

Passenger car sales rose 6 percent from a year ago to 212,189 units, while truck sales plummeted 27 percent to 52,017 units.

Japan's top automaker, Toyota Motor Corp., sold 115,093 vehicles, down 4.1 percent from a year earlier, while Honda Motor Co. Ltd. sold 43,844 units, up 9.8 percent.

Sales by Nissan Motor Co. Ltd. climbed 4.1 percent to 48,256 in April.

The number of imported cars increased 3.4 percent to 19,351 units. ***AFP***

Thai Airways prexy to also act as chair

BANGKOK—Thai Airways International's incoming president, Kanok Abhiradee, said Wednesday that he would take on the additional role of chair, replacing Virabongsa Ramangkula who would quit to avert a strike.

Kanok, who was due to begin work at the national carrier on Thursday, was named to the post in February after Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra ordered a boardroom purge to rid the airline of corruption and inefficiency.

Despite the turmoil, and this week's strike threat called by pilots angry over the way Virabongsa appointed high-level staff, Kanok said he felt confident about taking over at the helm of the troubled carrier.

"I don't feel worried, and neither should the airline executives because it is their job to handle these sorts of problems," he told reporters.

It was not immediately known whether Kanok's appointment to the chair's role would be temporary.

Five pilots met with Transport and Communications Minister Wan Muhamad Nor Matha Monday to call for Virabongsa's departure, saying his appointment of a new vice president for aviation had violated company rules.

Virabongsa agreed to quit but company officials said they expected he would not formally offer his resignation until Thursday.

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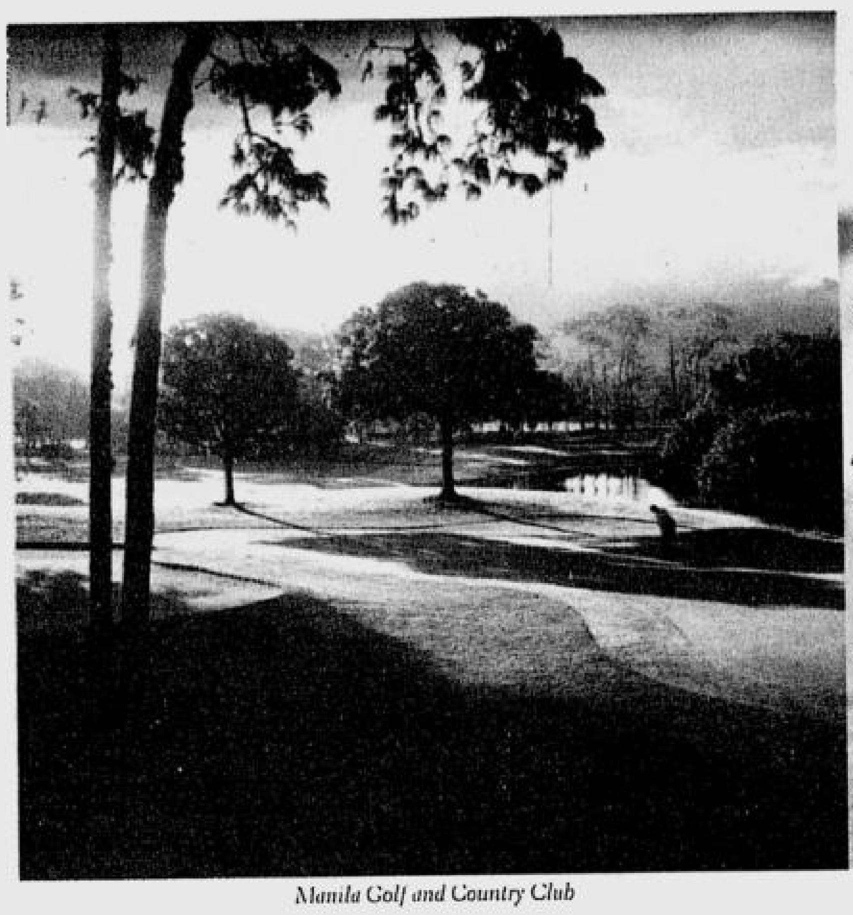
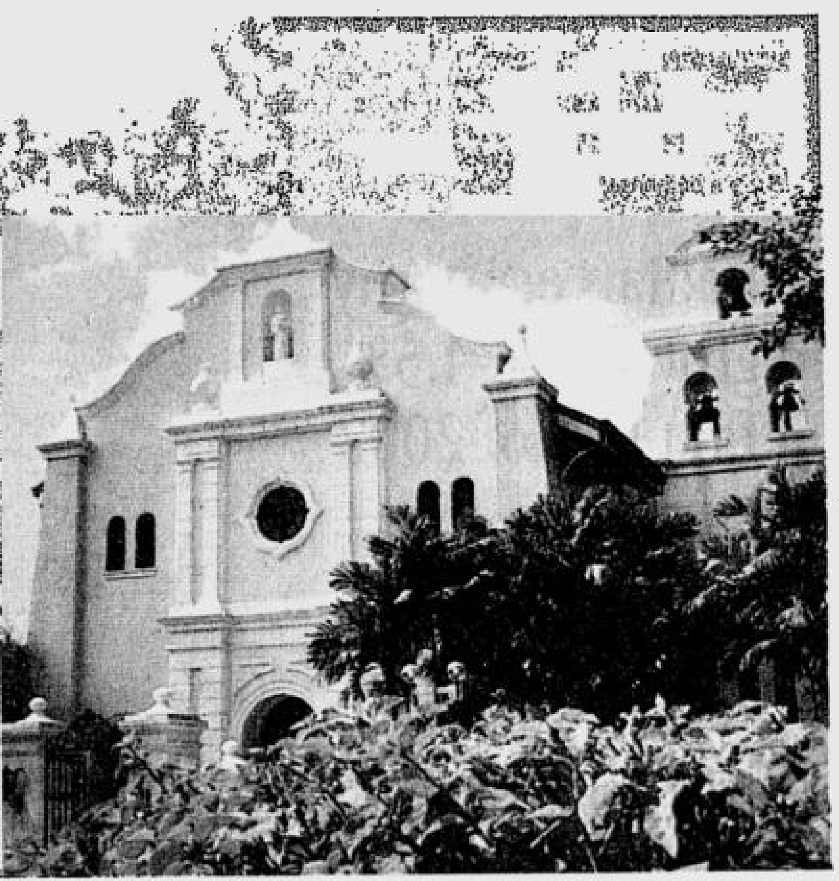


Manila Golf and Country Club

Manila Polo Club



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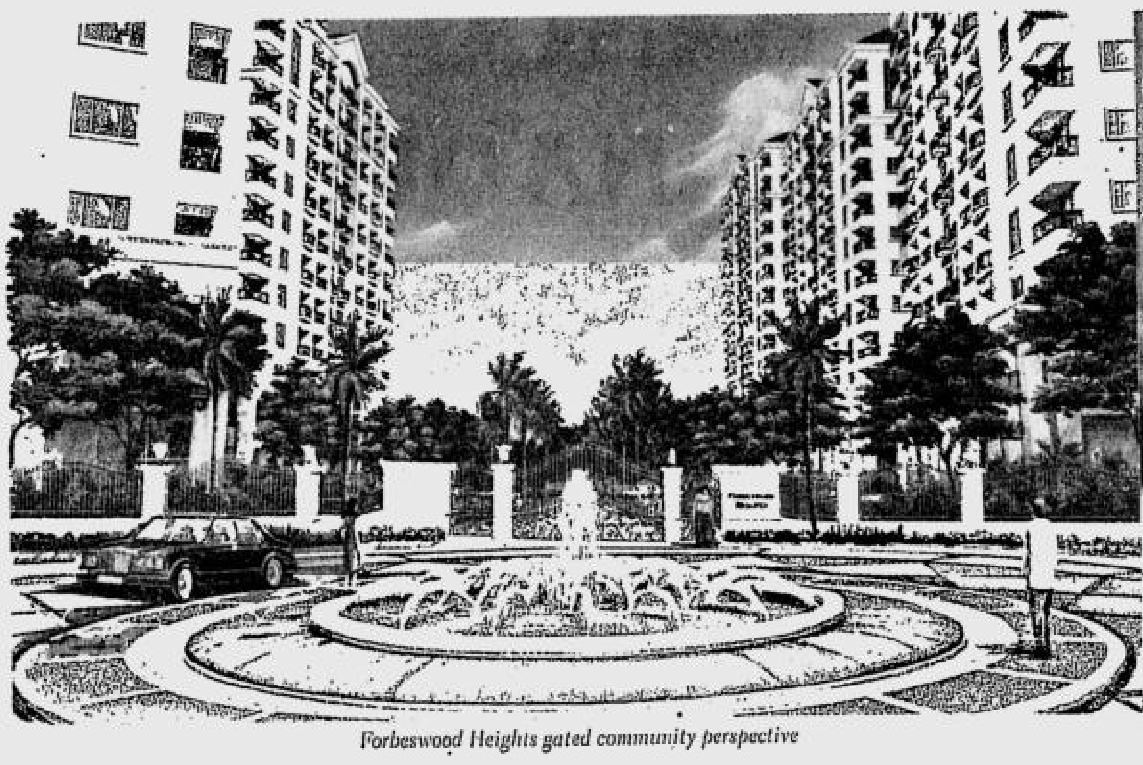
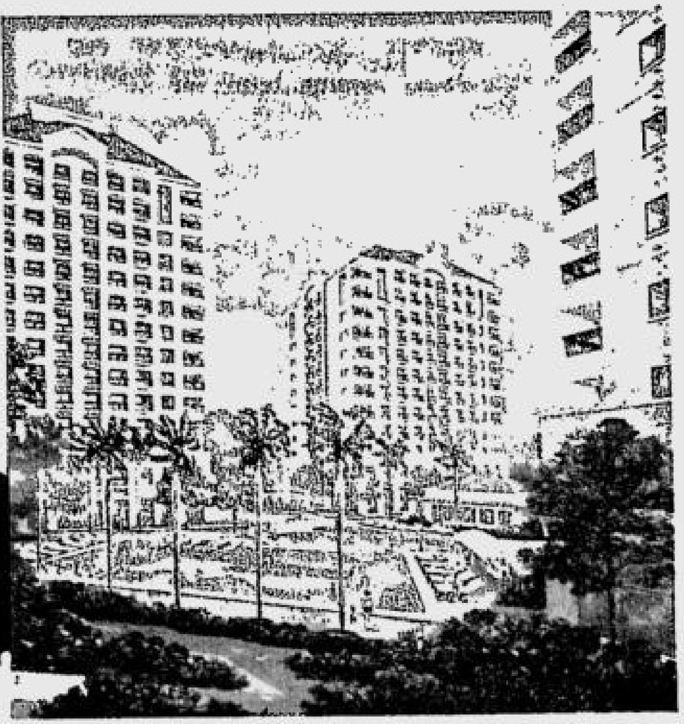


Forbeswood Heights gated community perspective

Village town center



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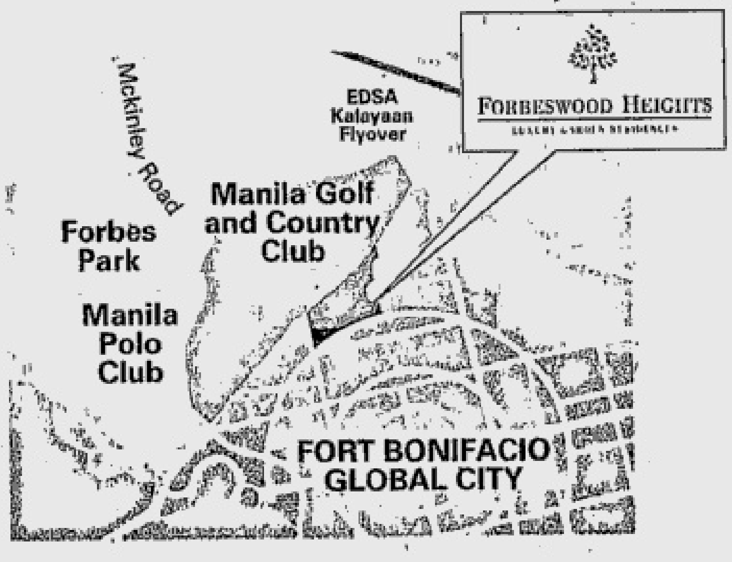
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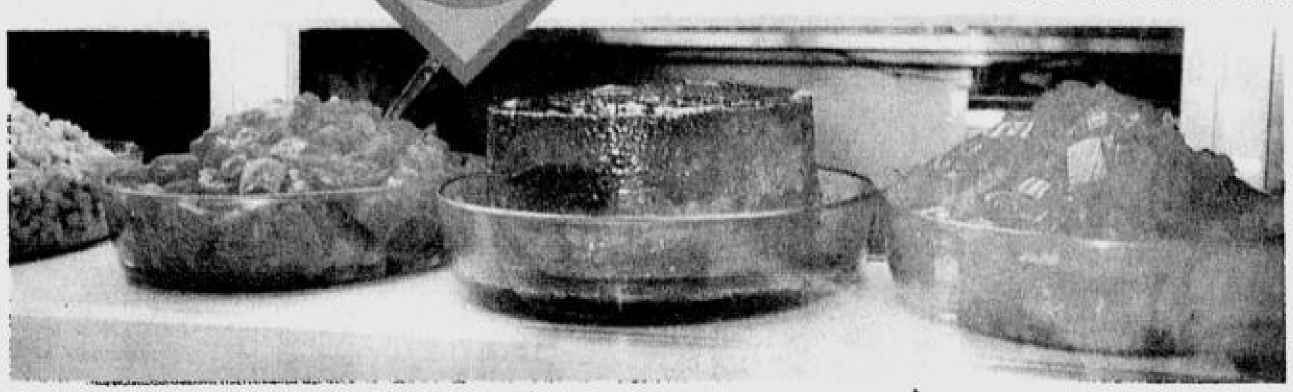
LIFESTYLE

Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

Tastes

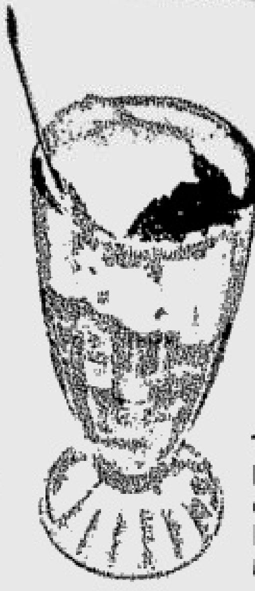


BEANS, green *gulaman*, *leche flan* and red *gulaman*

Sweet and crushed-ice cooler

IN GOOD TASTE

Doreen G. Fernandez



THE PATENTED, original Digman *halo-halo*

"*SUMER is icumen in,*" sang one poet. "Summertime, and the living is easy..." wailed another; and "I love Paris when it sizzles..." claimed still, by one other. Now that it is the heart of the Philippine summer, May time, when life can be easy (*mangga't suman* in Antipolo, boat rides and beaches, cooling off out of town), it can also be sizzling. And thoughts turn to coolers, crushed ice, cold drinks, frosty glasses and *halo-halo*.

Melded

It means "mix-mix," we explain to foreign friends. The eclectic mixture may puzzle, because at the bottom of the tall glass could lie: red and green *gulaman*; translucent *kaong*; sweet *macapuno* strands; beans, red and yellow; chickpeas; slices of sweetened *saba* banana; *haleyang ube*, *kundol*, golden *langka*, quivering *leche flan*. On top there could be crushed ice, preferably shaved by hand from a whole block. Or ice cream. All melded together by a trickle of milk, all melting sweetly and coolly together. All to cool down hot throats and tempers in a Philippine summer.

Where did it come from? people ask. Did it come from Japan, since tales are told of Japanese *halo-halo* vendors in "peacetime" before the Japanese War—who disappeared just before the conflict and supposedly reappeared as army personnel who had shed their *agents provocateurs* vendors' costumes.

I do not believe it came from Japan, but from right here, and from its Southeast Asian neighbors. Note that the crushed-ice-sweetened-tidbits formula is found all over: *ruam mit* in Thailand, *bubur chacha* in Malaysia, *chendol* in Indonesia, *gula melaka* in Malaysia and Indonesia, and among Filipinos, such analogues as *maiz con hielo*, *gulaman at sago* and the *pinipig*-sprinkled *guinumis* with *gata*. All are sweet and crushed-ice cool. They are snacks, but could be desserts. They are desired year-round, since our weather never really cools down too much.

I have witnessed *halo-halo* in tall glasses, in plastic glasses (to take home), in bowls. It has come to our tables ready-to-eat, or has invited our participation by appearing as a tray of ingredients, from which we can choose and assemble. In hotel coffee shops, it comes with sporting little umbrellas, flowers and colorful straws. In *carinderias*, it is generally in a short water glass, and costs about P15.

Worth a trip

One of the very, very best I have tried is the **Razon Halo-Halo** in Guagua, Pampanga (LM Subdivision, Sta. Filomena, Guagua; tel. [045] 900-2489), that is worth a trip by itself, or even a long detour. On our first search, we had simply stopped in the plaza, asked about the best *halo-halo* in town, and were directed unhesitatingly to a small house in the LM Subdivision.

SWEET/ p.C2

> A frosty glass of snack, or dessert if you will, the 'halo-halo' is desired year-round since our weather never really cools down too much

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Best Restaurant Recipes: May 4 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Twice Cooked Chicken; Binagoongang Baboy with Green & Yellow Mango; Garlic Tuna with Yellow Mango; Old China Town Pancit Canton; Spanish Horns (Chicken Wings); Burger with Real Natural Gravy. P750
Mango Fiesta: May 4 (Sat) 2 - 5 p.m. Mango Tiramisu Cake with White Chocolate Curls; Summer Mango Bread; Mango Foccacia Bread; Mangoes & Cream Dessert; American Apple-Mango Pie; White Forest Mango Cake. P750

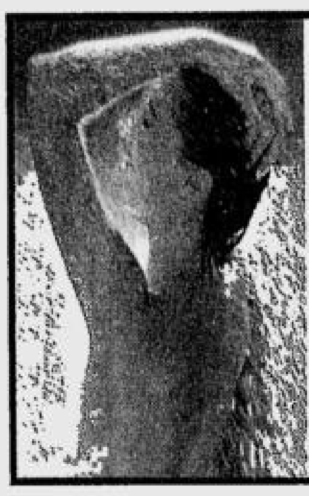
ONE-DAY SPECIALS (FOR ADULTS)
Japanese Cooking: May 11 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Miso Soup; Mixed Tempura; Sukiyaki; Kamameshi; assorted Sushi; Kappamaki; Tekamaki; California maki and Nigiri. P800
Baking with Institutional Mixes: May 11 (Sat) 1:30 - 5 p.m. Assorted Brownies (Black Forest, Apple Chunk, Rocky Road); Pineapple Carrot Cake; Choco-Banana Loaf; Chocolate Muffins with Fudge Frosting; Hotdog on Stick; Butterscotch Squares and Chocolate Crinkles. Bonus: Chocolate Rhumballs. P500
Kakanin: May 18 (Sat) 1:30 - 5 p.m. Pichi-Pichi, Cassava Cake, Putong Puti, Cuchinta, Sapin-Sapin, Maja Blanca. Bonus: Maya Bibingka and Salabat. P600.
Pinoy Pika Pika: May 25 (Sat) 1:30 - 5 p.m. Crispy Dilis, Ukoy, Chicharon, Crunchy Kangkong, Banana Chips, Kropeck. Bonus: Homemade achara. P600.

SUMMER CULINARY WORKSHOPS FOR BOYS & GIRLS AGED 6 & ABOVE & TEENERS (Pre-registration required)
Junior Culinary Workshop for kids aged 6 and above: Second Batch - May 14 & 15 (Tues-Wed) 8:30 - 12 noon. Day 1: Tri-Colored Noodle Soup, Layered Vegetable Pie, Fish Sticks, Melon Shake. Day 2: Taco Pizza, Stuffed Pan Pizza, Fruity Custard Cake, Plate-size Chocolate Chip Cookies, Ice box Cake. Lecture on kitchen safety, proper measurement, table setting and napkin folding. Fee: P1,500 inclusive of ingredients, apron and chef's hat.
Young People's Cook-In for Teeners: Second Batch - May 16 - 18 (Th-S) 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Day 1: Muffins and Coolers Unlimited: Coco-Bibingka Muffins, Veggie Muffins, Cheesy Corn Muffins, Mocha Float with Coffee Ring, Choco-Banana Muffins, Cool Pink Panther. Day 2: Potato and Egg Cookery: Magic Potato Croquettes, Skillet-Poached Eggs, Potato Nests, Flavored Potato Strings, Eggs in Salami Cups, Cheezy Yema Balls. Day 3: Baking Made Easy: Berry-Choco Trifle, Fudgy Smores, Crinkled Mini-Cheesecake, Mango-Pandan Delight, Rice Waffle Ala Mode. Fee: P2,000 inclusive of ingredients, apron and chef's hat.

CERTIFICATE COURSES WITH HANDS-ON FOR ADULTS (Pre-registration required)
Cake Decorating (Basic): May 4 & 11 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Lecture workshop on fundamentals of cake decorating; coloring, designing, template, icing (boiled, butter, caramel, chocolate, sugar icing); basic boarders, jelly lettering, basic flower making and bunching and motif. Free decorating tips. P2,000.
Cooking II (Comprehensive Cooking) For Career Cooks: May 8 - 10 or May 22 - 24 (W-F) 8:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. Coverage: menu planning, standard techniques of preparing stocks, soups, sauces, dressings, salads, main dishes, homemade cold cuts, etc. applicable to 1001 recipes including plate and platter presentation. Free lunch P2,500
Baking I (Basic): May 8 - 10 or May 22 - 24 (W-F) 1:30 - 5 p.m. Hands-on techniques in preparing basic pie crust, different types of cakes, quick bread, yeast breads and more. P2,000
Cake Decorating (Advanced): May 18 & 25 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Fondant & Marzipan making; Flower making & bunching, Cake Panelling; Debut and Wedding Cake assembly. P2,000.
Restaurant Operations: May 24 & 25 (F-S) 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Kitchen organization, cycle menu planning, costing, cost control, purchasing, labor, payroll, inventory, and restaurant works, menu presentation of new popular restaurant, proven techniques on profitable service operations with free lunch. P2,000.
Cooking I (Basic) For Messmen, Stewards and Beginners: May 28 - 31 (T-F) 1:30 - 5:00 p.m. Basic food preparation, cooking methods for vegetables, pasta, meats and poultry dishes; Techniques of de-boning chicken and fish; Basic garnishing; Table setting and napkin folding; Actual preparation of popular Filipino and Oriental dishes. P2,200

EVENING SESSIONS: May 14, 15 and 16 (T-Th) 5:30 - 8:30 p.m.
Catering: Portion Control, Costing, Inventory, Table Layout & Equipment Sourcing with actual preparation of popular catering dishes: Morcon, Galantina, Pork Asado, Soy Chicken, Roast Pork, Baked Macaroni, All Meat Paella and special Gulaman dessert. P2,000
Bakery & Bakeshop: Commercial methods used in preparing breads, pies and cakes including costing, production batching with actual hands-on. P2,000
Integrated Workshop on Waitering and Bartending: Coverage: Creative techniques for efficient table setting and attractive arrangement, napkin folding and skirting; Suggested selling techniques; order taking; Table setting; Setting up service station and checkpoint; Serving beverage; Bartending basics; and Cocktail mixing and garnish. P2,000

For reservations and inquiries, visit the Maya Kitchen at the 8th Floor, Liberty Building,
A. Arnaiz Ave. (Pasay Road), Makati City or call tels. 892-1185 or 892-5011 loc. 108 (Tues. - Sat.);
or e-mail us at mayakitchen@pacific.net.ph



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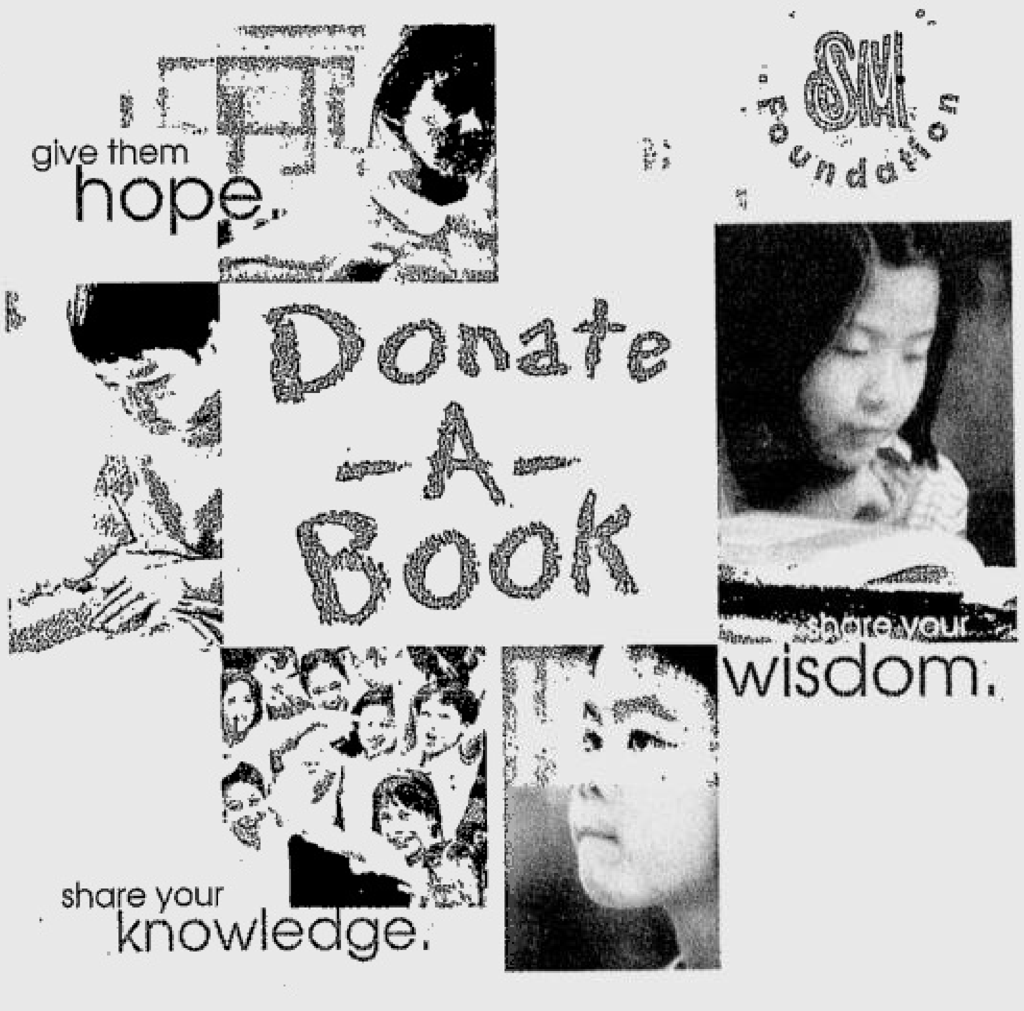

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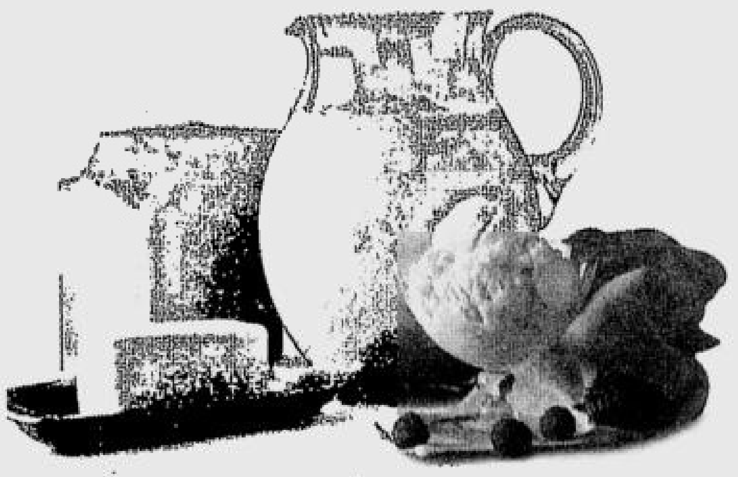
The return of a well-loved milk brand

By Cheche V. Moral

THIS brand may spring nostalgia to Filipinos for the long rainy days. Its creamy evaporated milk lent richness to their bowls of warm, soothing *champorado*, or for the summers, it laced the colorful sweets in their glasses of cold, refreshing *halo-halo*. Its long absence in the local market was shrouded by a deluge of milk brands and milk varieties—evaporated, condensed, skim, whole/full-cream, low-fat, nonfat—each toting a promise of the goodness and benefits of the most popular dairy product. So Darigold was forgotten and relegated to nothing but a pleasant memory.

DARIGOLD
FAT FREE MILK
DARIGOLD
HOMOGENIZED MILK
DARIGOLD
CHOCOLATE REDUCED FAT MILK

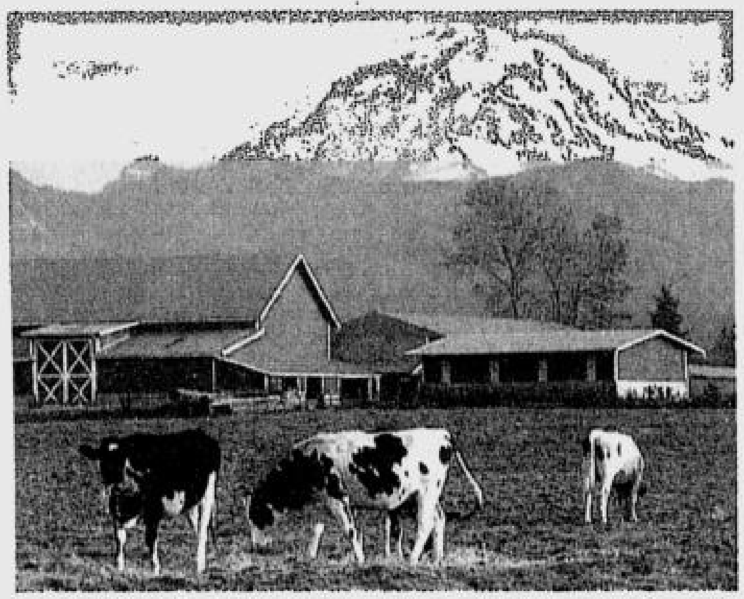
A few weeks ago, while everyone was getting his milk moustache from other brands, Darigold sneaked back into the country. To reclaim its share in the Philippine milk market, the Seattle, Washington-based brand, unlike other companies, did not bring with it fancy claims that extol the virtues of milk and the advantages of drinking it. "Milk is an everyday beverage. Everybody knows it is nutritious and good for the body," Seymour H. Cherun, SVP for sales and marketing of KLT Fruits Inc. (tel. 747-9615, 634-5792), distributor of Darigold, explains their no-nonsense approach in marketing.



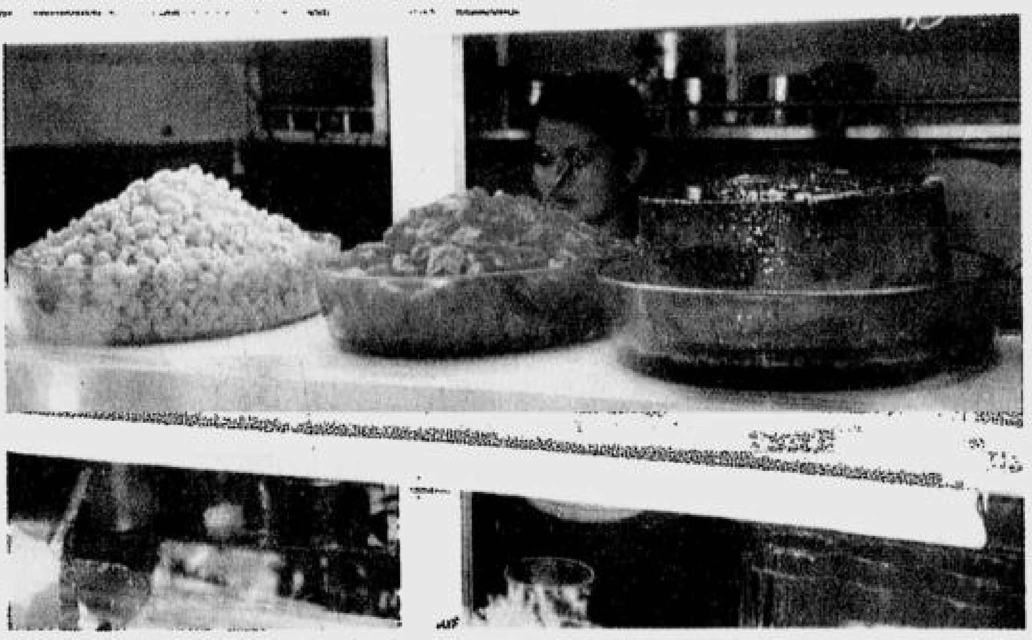
Intent on meeting competitors head-on, Darigold instead has introduced four of its milk varieties—Homogenized Milk, Reduced Fat Milk, Fat Free Milk and Reduced Fat Chocolate Milk—supplied in 1-quart cartons. "Filipinos were only familiar with Darigold's evaporated milk. Now they'll know the brand has other varieties, the same varieties that are popular to milk drinkers," Cherun says.

According to Cherun, quality and taste are Darigold's edge over other existing brands. Continuous quality testing and monitoring are performed at its processing plants—from the health condition of cows to each product that leaves their facility. The dairy products undergo ultra-pasteurization, which exposes them to very high temperatures, eliminating certain microorganisms that cause disease and spoilage. This process is done with painstaking care. Darigold milk therefore doesn't turn sour

THE RETURN/ p.C5



CONTINUOUS quality testing and monitoring are performed, including the health condition of cows.



GARBANZOS, gulaman and leche flan

Sweet and crushed-ice cooler

From page C1

There three generations ago, Apung Sersia made the original, then taught it to her daughter Apung Malta, who passed it on to her daughters Severina, Elena and Virginia Razon, septuagenarians when I met them. Severina has passed away, but Elena and Virginia still run it with the help of younger relatives.

This is a simple and excellent *halo-halo*, with only three flavor-makers: soft slices of *dayap*-fragrant *leche flan*, bits of sweetened *saba* bananas and macapuno cooked in syrup. The ice is, of course, *bagong kaskas*, and one hears the rasp and whisper of the scraper as one waits. The drink is *malapot* all the way through, not turning watery at any point. It now costs P35. There is also a great *pancit palabok*: fat *bihon*, a red sauce with baby shrimps and crumbled *chicharon*.

And then there is the famous **Digman Halo-Halo**, more than half-a-century old. Take the coastal road to Cavite, and turn off to the right toward Bacoor, before hitting the E. Aguinaldo Highway. After driving past stands selling *talaba*, *tahong* and *alimango*; after you have seen the Iglesia ni Kristo on the left, and have passed under a welcoming ark, turn right on the quiet road that leads to Barrio Digman. There seem to be *halo-halo* stands and stores up and down the street, but there is only one original.

The original Digman Halo-Halo was made by Benjamina Toledo Gonzalez, "*noong dalaga pa siya*," says her son, Edilberto Gonzalez, 50. He does not remember ever being without it. First they had *gata* in the mixture, and sold it from a *kubo* that burned down. The next *kubo* is now a very large house, with the *halo-halo* store across the street. Edilberto and his brother and sister run it, and are now helped by four of his six children.

Classic

What is it like? Classic. Any or all of the following: red and green *gulaman*, *kaong*, beans red and yellow, *macapuno* strips, *saba* banana slices, spoonfuls of *haleyang ube*, *langka* and *kundol* when in season, slabs of *leche flan*. Ice cream for the deluxe edition (P42) and hand-shaved ice for the regular edition (P32). *Maiz con hielo* is also available.

The Digman version is the classic *halo-halo* of provincial childhoods, but revved up considerably. A dozen ingredients, all freshly cooked each morning, uphold the standards.

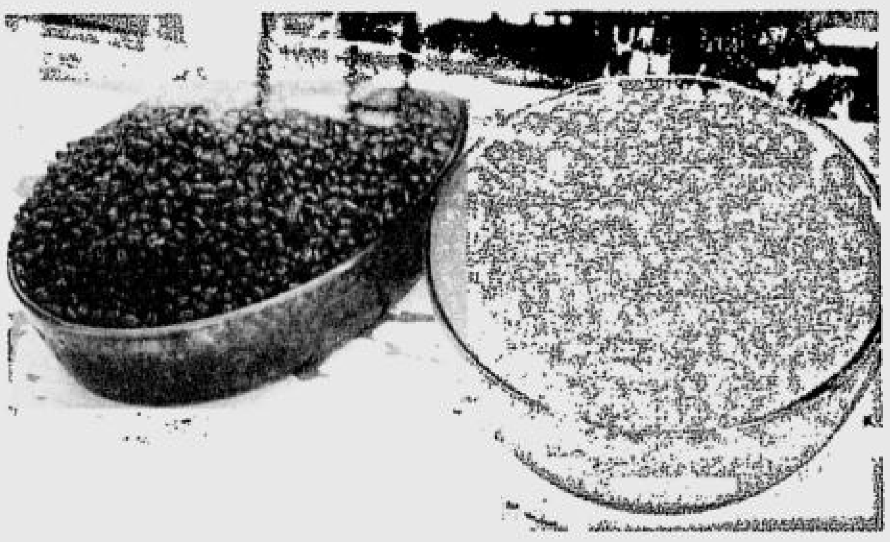
EDILBERTO Gonzales of Digman Halo Halo

(The only ingredient I found elsewhere that Digman did not have was: cornflakes, in a *halo-halo* bowl in Roxas City.) Edilberto says he still patronizes his own *halo-halo*, but chooses his favorite ingredients, designing his own custom-made drink.

Pork *asado siopao* is also available, and has been, since the store started. The day starts at about 10 a.m., when the blocks of ice are delivered, and the *kaskas* starts. At about lunchtime come the other specialties: pork barbecue, *pancit*, *empanada*. The *escaparate* bears other relatives' and friends' products: *tahong* chips, garlic peanuts.

This *halo-halo* is patented, with an official patent number, which protects it from imitators. Other stores use the word "original," but add little signs or letters to mark their identities and protect them from patent suits, of which there have been some.

Rush *halo-halo* hour is about 3 p.m., and most of the customers are from outside Digman, coming in cars to this little street. Mr. Garcia sits in the store and makes change—never, by the way, with the money from the first sale of the day, the *buena mano*. This is kept in the store till the next day. It must be good practice because the product persists in flavor, and its success continues.



BLACK beans (*mongo*) and *kaong*

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Learn the basics of cooking and managing restaurants

EXPLORE the most popular restaurant recipes in Maya's Best Restaurant Recipes course on May 4, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Recipes include Twice Cooked Chicken, Binagoongang Baboy with Green and Yellow Mango, Garlic Tuna with Yellow Mango, Spanish Horns (Chicken Wings) and Burger with Real Natural Gravy.

On the same day, 2-5 p.m., there's the Mango Fiesta class. Create mango desserts like Mango Tiramisu Cake with White Chocolate Curls, Summer Mango Bread, Mango Foccacia Bread, Mangoes and Cream Dessert, American Apple-Mango Pie and White Forest Mango Pie.

On May 11, get busy with Maya Kitchen's Japanese Cooking course, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Learn how to prepare authentic Japanese meals like Miso Soup, Mixed Tempura, Sukiyaki, Kamameshi, assorted Sushi, Kappamaki, Takamaki, California Maki and Nigiri.

Discover Baking with Institutional Mixes on May 11, 1:30-5 p.m. Make assorted brownies like Black Forest, Apple Chunk or Rocky Road. Or Pineapple Carrot Cake, Choco-Banana Loaf, Chocolate Muffins with Fudge Frosting, Hotdog on Stick, Butterscotch Squares and Chocolate Crinkles. Learn also Maya Kitchen's special recipe for Chocolate Rhumballs.

If you have kids aged 6 and up, enroll them in the two-day Junior Culinary Workshop on May 14-15, 8:30 a.m.-12 noon. Preregistration is required for this workshop.

And if your kids are in their teens, enroll them in the three-day Young People's Cook-In on May 16-18, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

The Kakanin course will be held on May 18, 1:30-5 p.m. And if your pining for your *lola's* Pinoy Pika Pika, join the course on May 25, 1:30-5 p.m. Recreate your childhood favorites like Crispy Dilis, Ukoy, Chicharon, Crunchy Kangkong, Banana Chips and Kropeck.

There are also courses for adults. Basic Cake Decorating will be held on May 4 and 11, 9 a.m.-4 p.m You can also enroll in the Advanced Cake Decorating course scheduled on May 18 and 25, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

And there is the Comprehensive Cooking course designed for career cooks. Classes are scheduled on May 8-10 and May 22-24, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

Or maybe you want to learn hands-on techniques in the preparation of basic pie crusts, different types of cakes and quick bread/yeast breads. Enroll in the Baking I (Basic) course scheduled on May 8-10 or May 22-24, 1:30-5 p.m.

For beginners, restaurant messmen and stewards, try enrolling in the Cooking I (Basic) course on May 28-31, 1:30-5 p.m.

If you want to start your own business, learn the ropes and enroll in the Restaurant Operations course scheduled on May 24-25, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

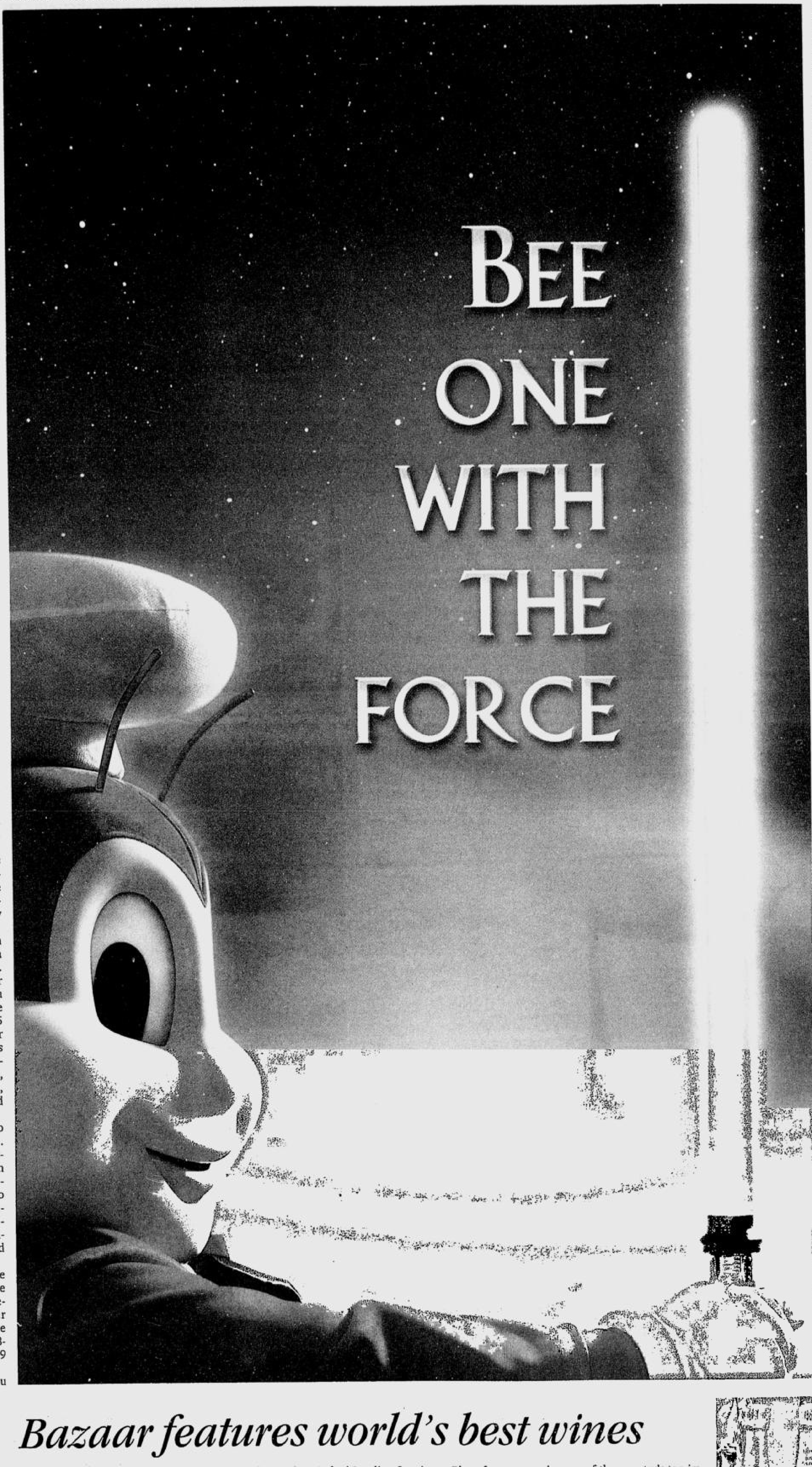
For those who work from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. and only have free time in the evenings, take advantage of convenient sessions on May 14, 15 and 16, 5:30-8 p.m.

Discover the rudiments of catering like the basics of portion control, costing, inventory, table layout and equipment sourcing. There will also be actual demonstration and preparations of such catering dishes like Morcon, Galantina, Pork Asado, Soy Chicken, Roast Pork, Baked Macaroni, All-Meat Paella and Special Gulaman Dessert.

Want to start your own profitable baking business? Enroll in the Bakery and Bakeshop course. Here, you will learn all the commercial methods used in preparing breads, pies and cake, including costing and production batching. There will be actual hands-on preparation of baked goodies.

Already have your own restaurant business? Enroll your restaurant staff in the Integrated Workshop on Waitering and Bartending. The course includes creative techniques for efficient table setting and attractive arrangement napkin folding and skirting. They will also get pointers on effective selling techniques, order taking; table setting; service station setup and checkpoint. Get them to learn the basics of beverage serving, bartending and cocktail mixing.

Visit Maya Kitchen at 8/F Liberty Building, Arnaiz Avenue (Pasay Road), Makati City, call 892-1185 or 892-5011 local 108 or e-mail mayakitchen@pacific.net.ph.



Salsa party highlights Mexican fest

ON THE FOURTH of May, Tequila Joe's will sweep your feet off with its "Cinco de Mayo" festival.

Try its specially prepared Mexican appetizer matched with a bottle of SMB Draft Beer and enjoy big discounts on all Mexican Wrapps with Free Barq's Rootbeer.

While enjoying dinner, the Mariachi Bands will dish out salsa music.

Fun will start at 9 p.m. with a Baila y Salsa dance party. Strips of *banderitas* and *pinatas* will also fill the place as comely servers wear their folkloric Mexican outfits. Enjoy Tequila drinks all for free.

Tequila Joe's branches are located at El Pueblo in Ortigas, Alabang Town Center and at the Glorietta 4, Ayala Center. TJ's Cebu is now open. Visit their website at www.tequilajoe.com.

Bazaar features world's best wines

MANDARIN Oriental, Manila and Philippine Wine Merchants present the "Clipper Lounge Wine Bazaar," a monthly wine-tasting and shopping experience at the hotel's newly renovated mezzanine lounge, on May 4 and 5, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. At least 37 wines from France, Italy, Spain, Australia, Argentina, Chile and the United States will be offered.

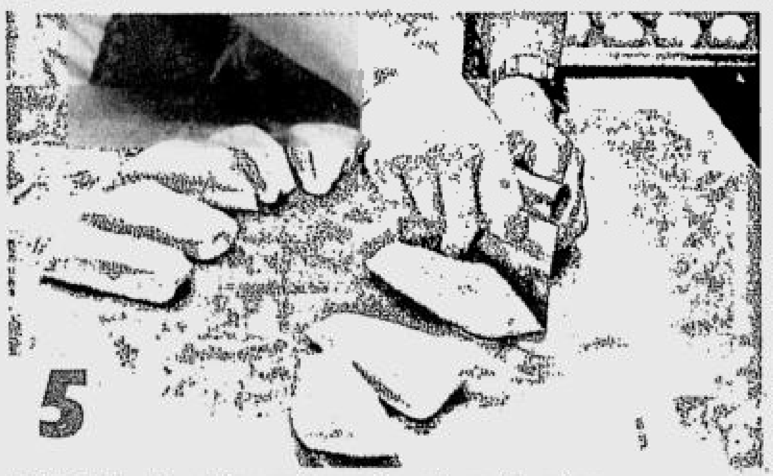
The exclusive selection of wines, including the highly revered French champagne Veuve Clicquot Yellow Label Brut, and top Italian sparkling wines Gancia Asti and Gancia Pinot di Pinot, will be made available to wine connoisseurs at discounted rates. Among them are Lafleur de Lynch, Beau Rivage Rouge and Curvee du Printemps Blanc from France; Bolla Valpolicella, Citra Merlot Terre di Chieti from Italy; Chivite Gran Feudo 96 Crianza from Spain; Oxford Landing Sauvignon Blanc from Australia; Trapiche Fond de Cave from Argentina; Mont Gras Quatro Reserva and Montes Malbec from Chile.

As an incentive to buyers, wines purchased at the bazaar may be consumed during bazaar hours at any of Mandarin Oriental's eight restaurants without additional corkage. Admission is free.

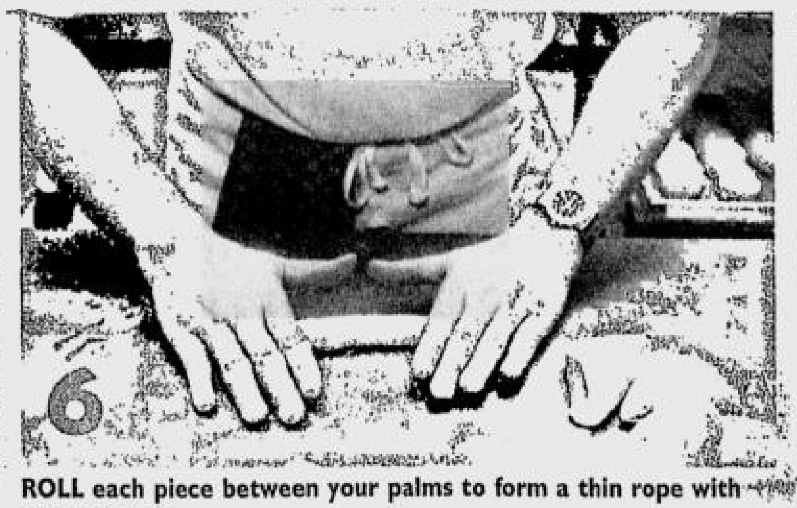
Headed by its founder Ralph Lim Joseph, the Philippine Wine Merchants remains one of the country's top importers and exclusive distributors of wines and champagnes from some of the world's finest vineyards and chateaux. It held a successful wine tasting event last year, "The Grand Wine Experience 2001," at Mandarin Oriental's grand ballroom that featured at least 250 wines from all over the world.

Call 750-8888 local 2401/02.

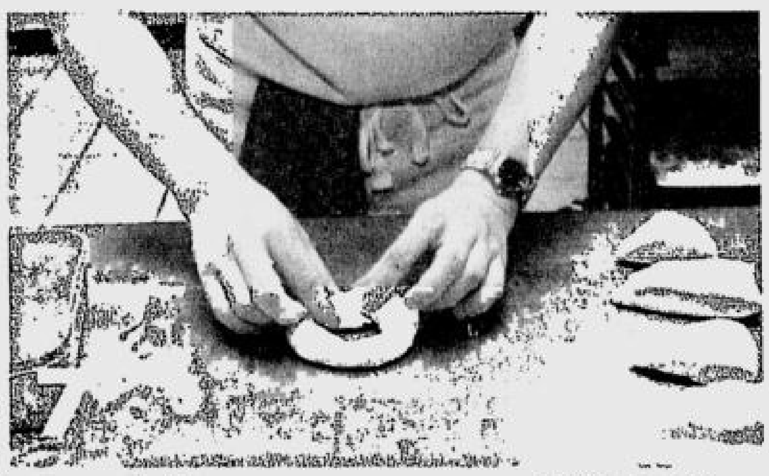
"CLIPPER Lounge Wine Bazaar," May 4 and 5, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Mandarin Oriental, Manila



DIVIDE the dough in small equal portions like pizza.



ROLL each piece between your palms to form a thin rope with tapered ends.



BRING the ends together to form a circle, with the tapered ends overlapping. With moistened fingers, pinch or lightly knead the ends so the circle is securely fastened. Leave the rings on the floured surface for 10 minutes.

Light and chewy bagels

By Vangie Baga-Reyes
Photos by Roger Carpio

THE HEADY aroma of bagels fresh from the oven, the chewiness of its texture and the lightness of its crust are indeed enticing. Bagels are small, ring-shaped rolls best served warm with fruit jam, butter or cream cheese on the side. Truly filling, bagels are a delight when they are toasted and sliced through the middle.

Bagels are Jewish bread popular not only in the United States, but also in the Philippines. Bagels originated in Austria, where they were called *beugeln*, meaning "rings."

Johnlu Koa, owner of French Baker that has 24 outlets and offers the best bagels in town, discloses that poaching is what makes bagels chewy. "The dough is poached for a few seconds before baking to create the bagels' familiar chewy texture and soft crust."

Bagels are made of flour, egg white, sugar, butter and milk. Such rich ingredients enhance the bread's flavor and also make its crust softer. To make it dense, the dough's first rising is limited from 15 minutes to an hour. Once shaped, let the dough rise again but only for a few seconds before cooking.

The bagels are poached for about 15 seconds to 1 minute. Poaching moistens the outer dough and prevents bagels from becoming crisp when baked.

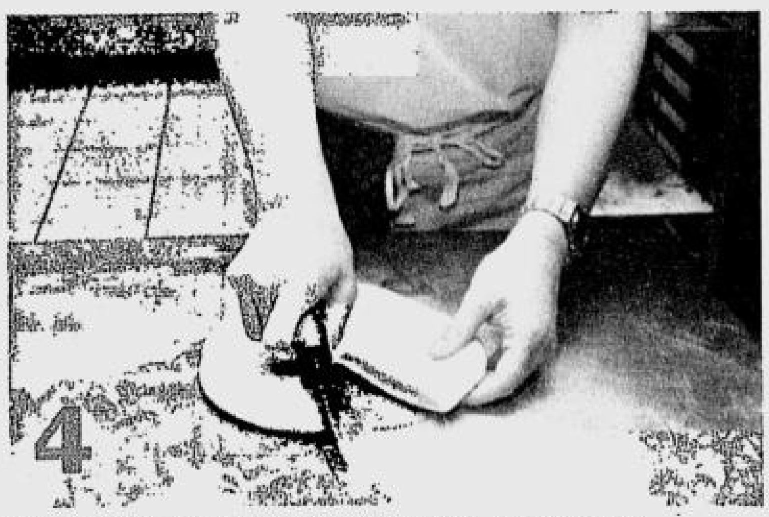
Before the bagels are baked, they are glazed with egg whites. You can also sprinkle them with coarse salt, sesame or poppy seeds. This recipe yields 10 bagels, 90 g apiece.

According to Koa, bagels are good for three to four days. So if you are wondering what to do with your old bagels, you can transform them into bagel chips. Using a serrated knife, cut bagels into small pieces (thinly sliced about 1/8 inch), air-dry them for a day and toast to perfection.

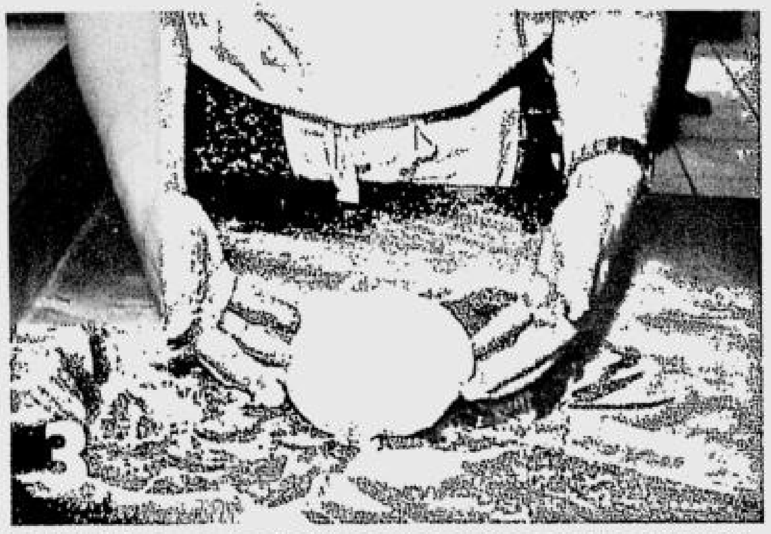
Ingredients:
2 eggs
1 c milk
2 tbsp vegetable oil
2 tbsp sugar
1 tsp salt
500 g flour
4 tsp yeast
2 tbsp sugar
2 egg white
4 tsp water
Sesame or poppy seeds or coarse salt

For suggestions, e-mail the author at vbaga@inquirer.com.ph

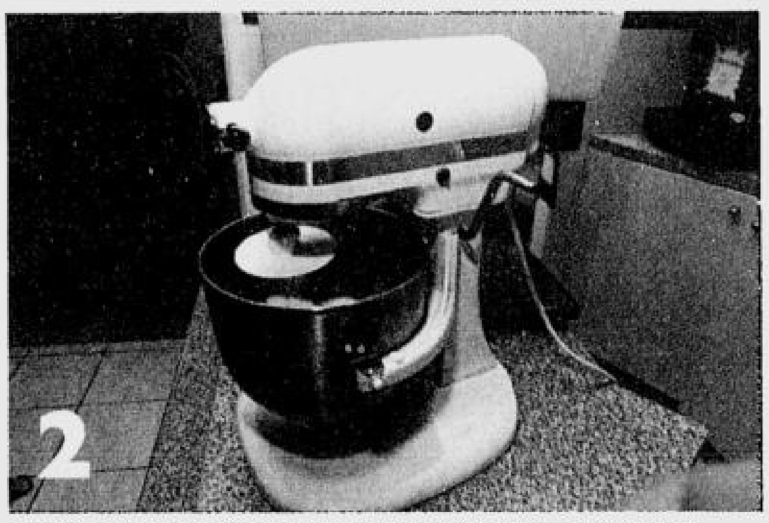
STEP-BY-STEP



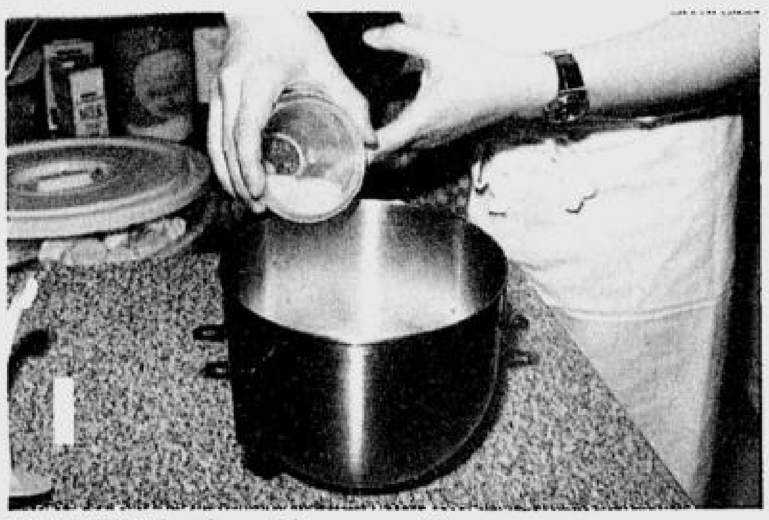
REMOVE the cover and punch the dough. Cut it in half.



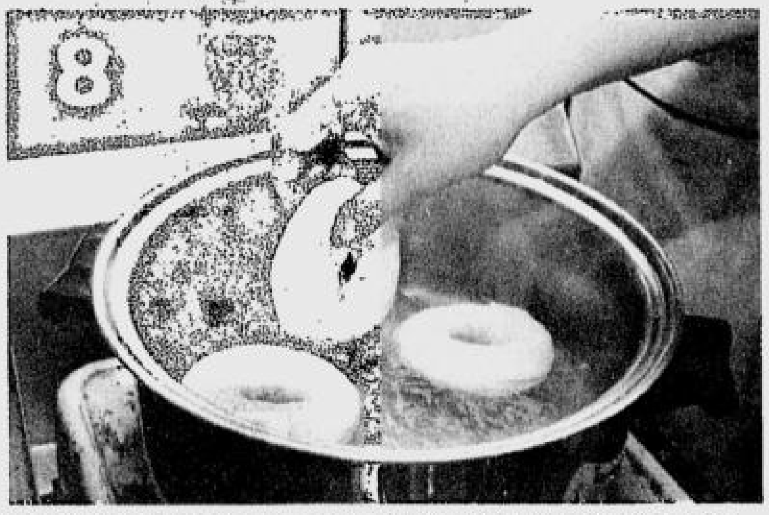
TRANSFER dough to a lightly floured surface and knead it until it is smooth and no longer sticky. Form the dough into a ball and cover with a towel or piece of plastic film for 15 minutes.



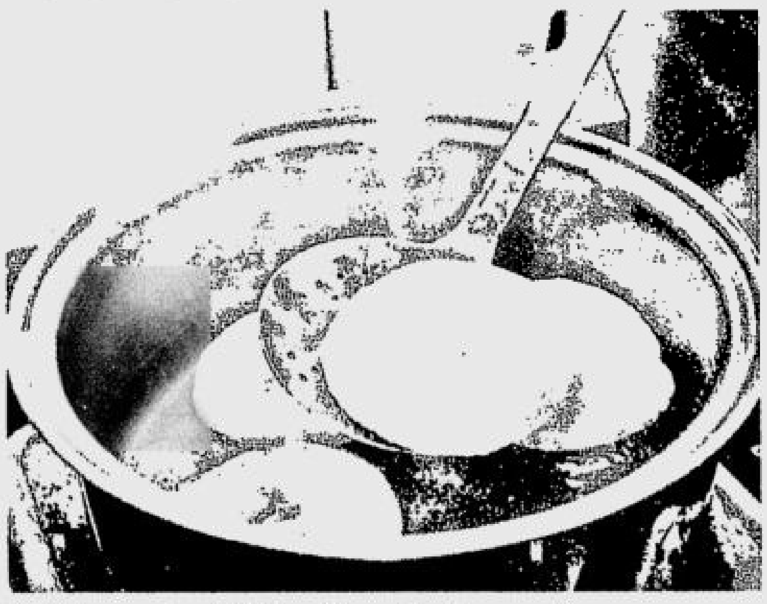
MIX in a Kitchen Aid with dough hook for three minutes on speed 1, then 12 minutes on speed 3 to form a smooth and soft dough.



IN A MIXER bowl, combine eggs, milk, vegetable oil, sugar, salt, flour and yeast.

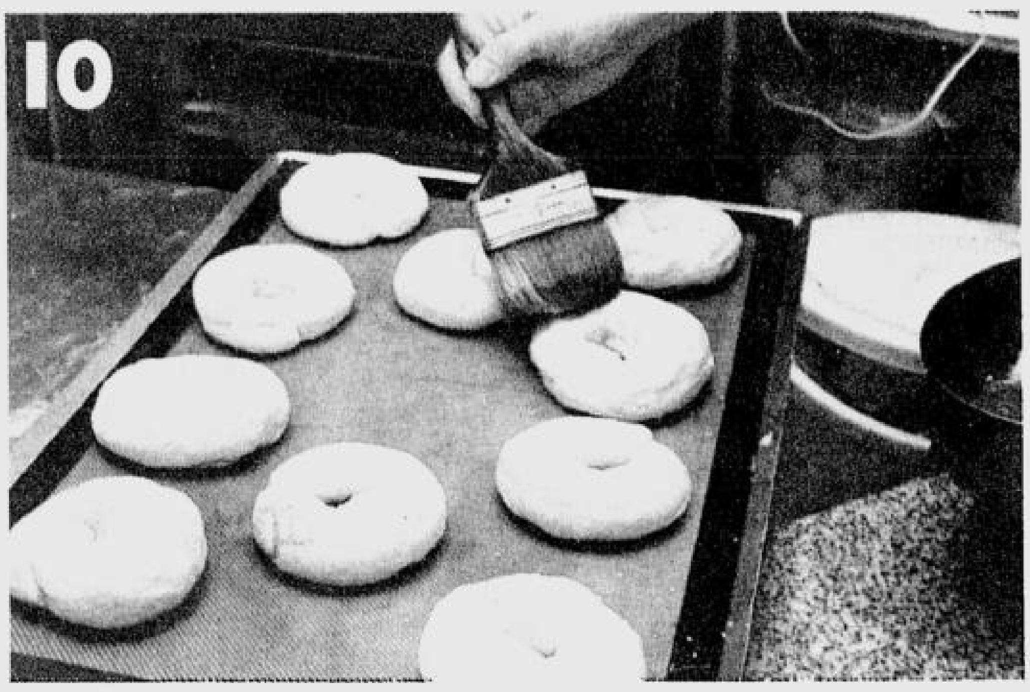


MEANWHILE, heat a large pan of water (about 2 liters) with 2 tbsp sugar and bring to a boil. Drop the bagels, a few at a time, into the boiling water and poach for 1 minute on each side until they begin to puff up.



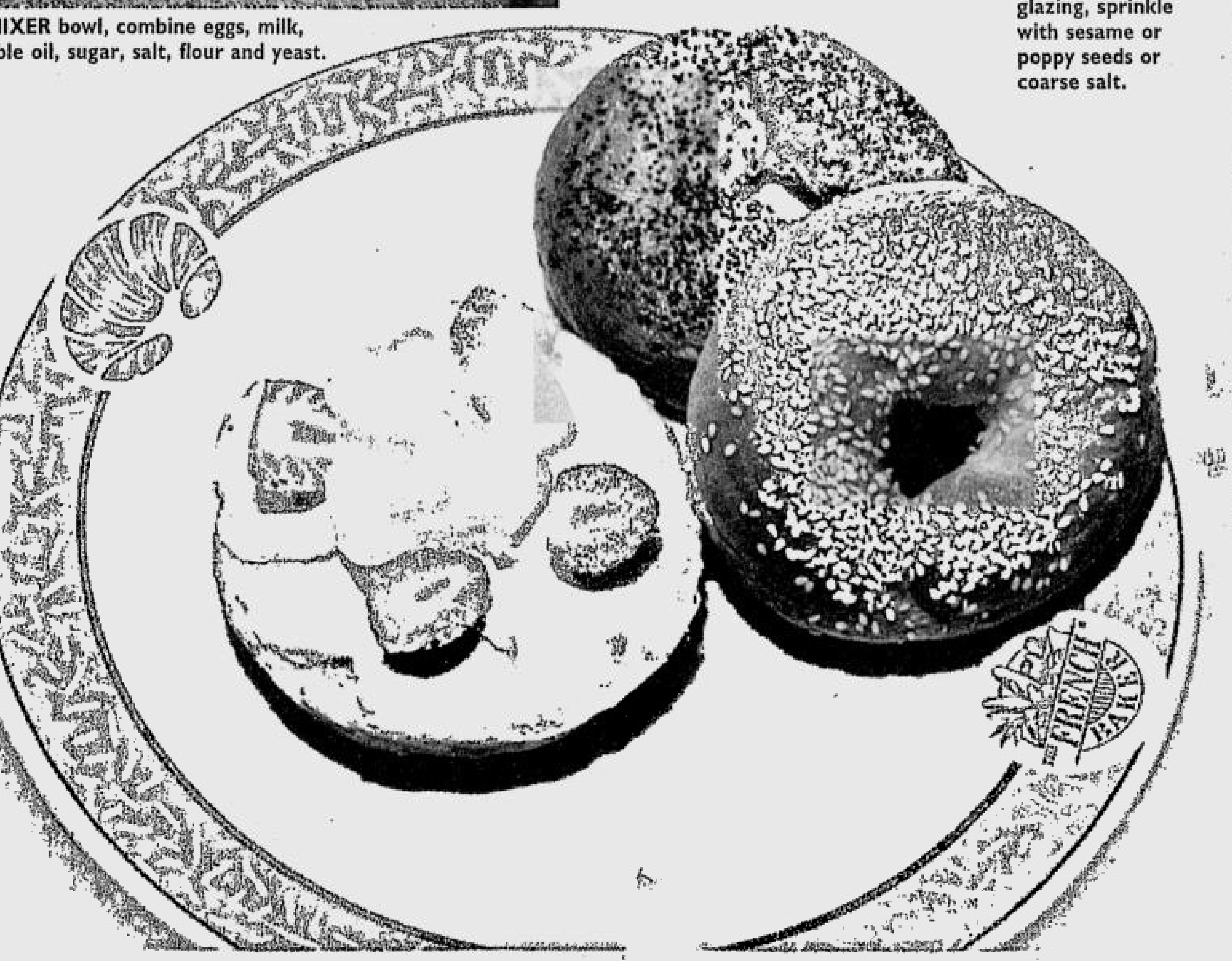
LIFT them out and drain with a wide skimmer. Place on a greased baking sheet.

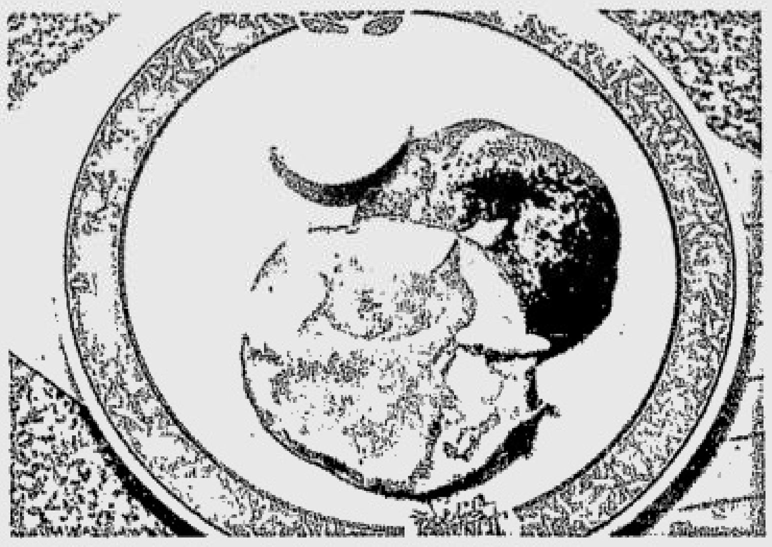
> Ring-shaped bagels are best served with fruit jam, butter, cream cheese or smoked salmon



BEAT 2 egg whites with 4 tsp water and brush it on the bagels. After glazing, sprinkle with sesame or poppy seeds or coarse salt.

BAKE at 180°C until golden brown. Cool them on a wire rack.





FRESHLY baked bagels are best eaten with fruit jam, cream cheese and smoked salmon.

Spring for the best dumplings in HK

From page C8

privy to the recipes of Hong Kong's best Chinese restaurant so take out the flour canister and don't forget the cornstarch. It can get a little tricky trying to whip the dumplings into fish or purse shapes but as with anything pleasurable, practice makes perfect.

Char Siu So

Stuffing:

1 kg barbecued pork loin
80 g diced onions
2 g salt
5 g chicken powder
180 g sugar
300 g water
55 g oyster sauce
10 g dark soya sauce
10 g light soya sauce
40 g cornstarch
300 g cake flour
300 g white flour
150 g vegetable oil
370 g water
750 g vegetable oil
150 g butter
600 g white flour

Mix all ingredients together, add the sauce and cook thoroughly. Set aside and let cool. Mix two kinds of flours, oil and water to a smooth dough and set aside. Mix the vegetable oil, butter and flour together to form a second dough. Flatten the first dough in a tray to 1-cm thickness, and then flatten and place the second dough on top to cover the bottom dough. Cool for an hour then roll to 4-mm thickness. Fold it four times and roll it again to 3-mm thickness. Use a 7-cm diameter cutter to cut out 40 circles, fill each with a little stuffing, brush egg wash on the edges and fold them. Bake at 250°C for 10 minutes.

Chive Dumplings

Stuffing:

500 g shrimp meat, finely minced
500 g chives, diced
75 g Chinese mushrooms, diced
90 g vegetable oil
10 g salt
5 g chicken powder
40 g sugar

Pastry:

75 g high-protein flour
75 g cornstarch
105 g chive water (blend the chives and water, sieve)

Mix the shrimp meat with the salt, chicken powder and sugar; add the rest of the filling and refrigerate for 4 hours. Cook the chive water, add flour and cornstarch, and mix to a dough. Using 10 g dough per portion, form each into circles 1-mm thick. Put the stuffing on top, press close into a purse shape and steam for 4 minutes.

Har Gau

Stuffing:

500 g prawn meat, finely minced
75 g bamboo shoots, shredded
5 g salt
3 g chicken powder
20 g sugar
90 g vegetable oil

Pastry:

150 g high-protein flour
15 g oil
20 g cornstarch
300 g boiling water

Mix all ingredient for the stuffing, and leave them refrigerated for 4 hours. Mix flour and cornstarch with the boiling water, then add oil to make a smooth dough. Using 10 g for each piece, form them into circles 1-mm thick, put a little filling onto each and press them close at the top like small purses. Place into steam baskets and steam for 5 minutes until done.

JOLLIBEE
STAR WARS
MEALS
Only P59
Jolly Hotdog Meal
Only P65
Jr. Champ Meal
Only P97
Champ Meal
SAVOR THE FORCE
Each meal comes with an Extra Large Softdrink and Swirl Fries
Potatoes
PROMO PERIOD: MAY 2 to JUNE 5, 2002
© 2002 Lucasfilm Ltd. & TM. All rights reserved.
Per DTI-NCR Permit No.0679 Series of 2002
bee happy

The return of a well-loved milk brand

From page C2

before its sell-by date, a problem often encountered with other brands of inferior quality.

The process also allows for Darigold milk to have an extended shelf life, Cherun says. Minus the three-week shipping period from the US, taste and quality of the products are maintained fresh for up to 45 days in the refrigerator, compared to a week for other brands.

For health-conscious Pinoys

Cherun says Darigold is perfect for health-conscious Filipinos who love milk but shun the fat and yet want the taste of whole or full-cream milk. "Unlike other brands, our Reduced Fat Milk and Fat Free Milk varieties don't taste bland. They're so good you won't miss out on the taste of whole milk," he says. With only 2-percent milkfat, the Reduced Fat variety has 38 percent lesser fat than whole milk. A dieter's dream is the Fat Free variant, with only 90 calories per serving, and none of it from fat. Well, with less to zero fat and with all the flavors of full-cream, how can any diet freak complain?

Similar to the Reduced Fat Milk, Darigold's thick and rich Reduced Fat Chocolate Milk will appeal even to the most figure-conscious adult, Cherun says. Chocolate milk is not just for kids anymore, he says. With 38-percent less fat, adults can indulge in the delicious goodness of chocolate milk without worrying about the extra fat, he adds.

Passionate, give-me-the-fat milk lovers are not left out with the Homogenized Milk, Darigold's whole or full-cream milk variant. If the reduced-fat and nonfat varieties taste as good as Cherun says, one can only imagine how this variant tastes. If one's after the flavor, Homogenized Milk has got it, bar-none, he affirms.

Acknowledging Filipinos' increasing fondness for dairy products, Cherun says other Darigold products will soon be introduced to local consumers, among them its premium low-fat yogurts.

Baking is bonding time with your kids

THE BEST summer activities for children are the ones that are fun and rewarding. And baking is the top choice.

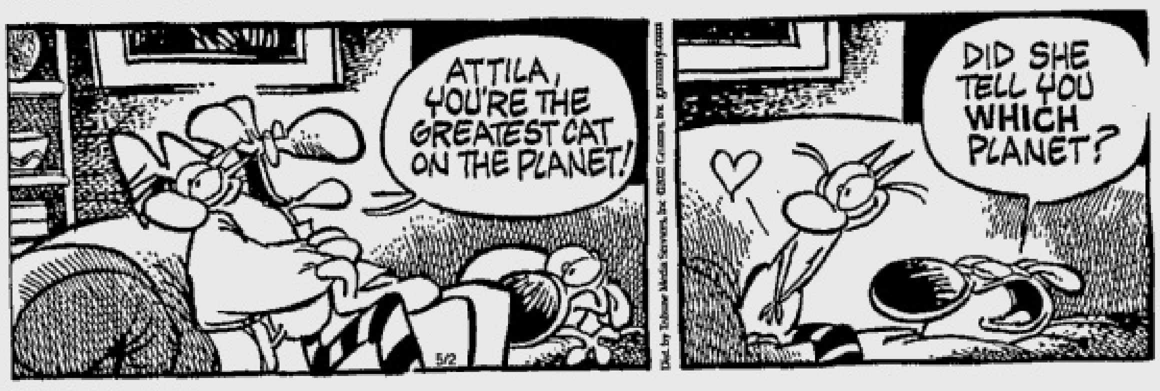
When you teach children how to bake, they learn more than making delicious treats. Baking helps improve math and reading skills, encourages teamwork and teaches children about the "science of food." But more importantly, it builds fond memories and creates traditions that last a lifetime.

Here are some guidelines to a successful baking experience with your kids during vacation:

- When choosing what to bake, look for age-appropriate recipes. Consider the number of steps and ingredients involved as well as the level of difficulty. Betty Crocker Cake Mixes are easy and fun to bake. Choose from great tasting Betty Crocker Supermoist Brownie and Muffins Mixes.
- If you have chosen a more elaborate recipe, simply prepare parts of the recipe beforehand to streamline the process.
- Unplug and clear all unnecessary appliances from your workspace.
- If using the kitchen counter, have a step or stool nearby so your child will be able to reach the workspace easily.
- Have all baking tools on hand, including plenty of paper towels and sponges for any spills.
- Before starting the recipe, read it through with the child so he/she understands the steps involved.
- Specify which steps he/she will be doing and which ones you will be helping with.
- Before starting, make sure you and your child wash your hands very carefully.
- Let the kids do everything from measuring, pouring and stirring ingredients to the final touches of decorating the desert.
- Don't worry if they lose interest or concentration. Send them away, finish the step and call them back.
- Enjoy the time together, make the clean up as fun as the actual baking. Make sure you and your child get a chance to sample what he/she has prepared. Praise him/her for the effort.

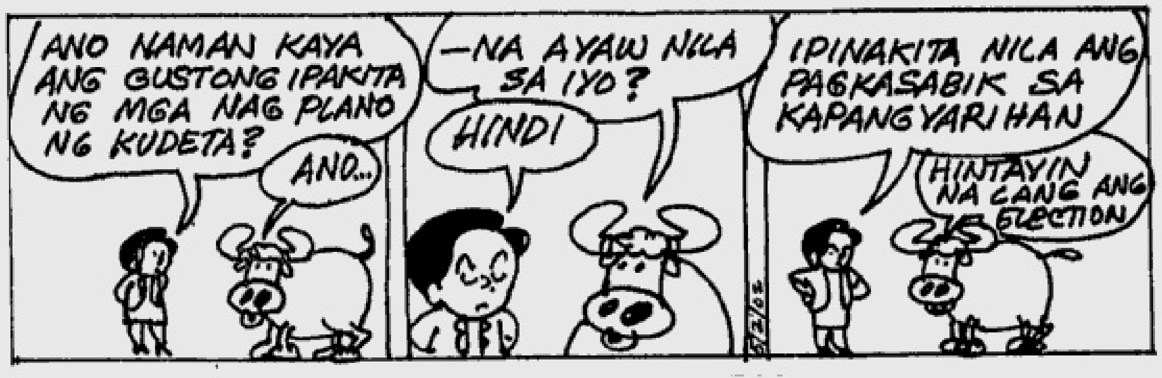
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


ATTILA, YOU'RE THE GREATEST CAT ON THE PLANET!
5/2
DID SHE TELL YOU WHICH PLANET?

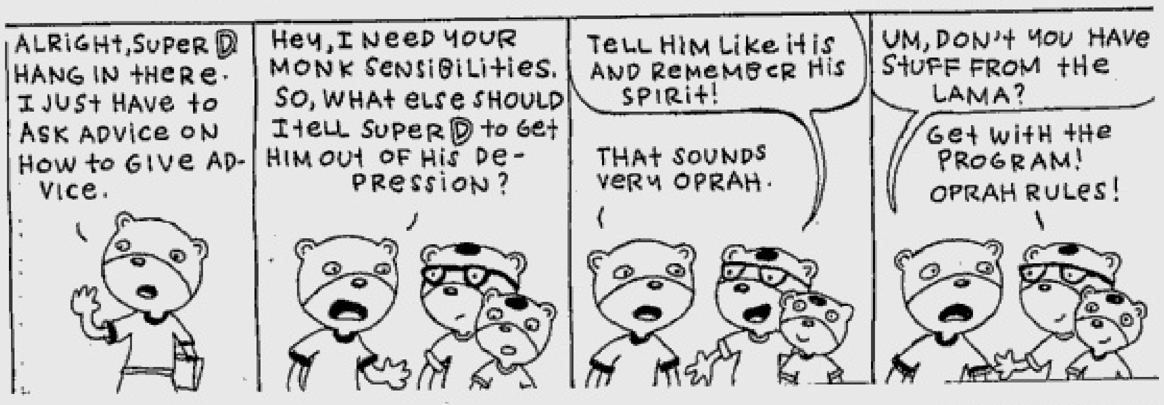
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


ANO NAMAN KAYA ANG GUSTONG IPAKITA NG MGA NAG PLANO NG KUDETA?
ANO...
—NA AYAW NILA SA IYO?
HINDI
IPINAKITA NILA ANG PAGKASABIK SA KAPANGYARIHAN
HINTAYIN NA LANG ANG ELECTION

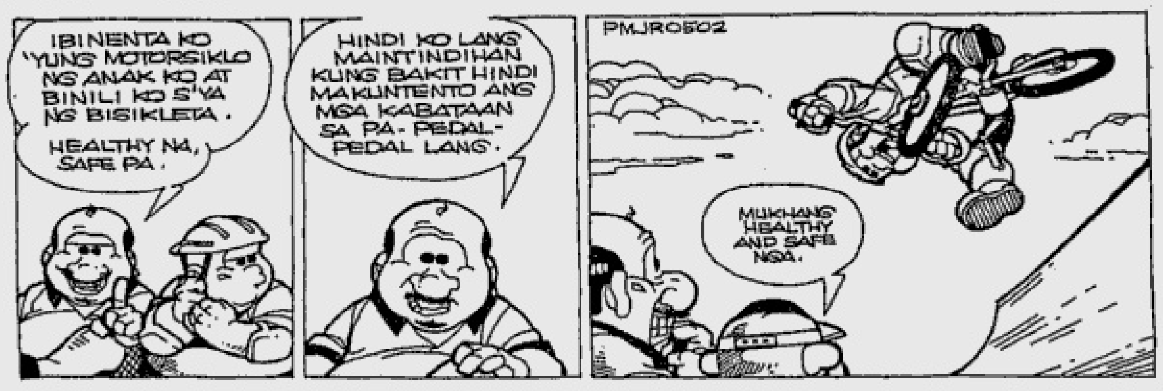
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


ALRIGHT, SUPER D HANG IN THERE. I JUST HAVE TO ASK ADVICE ON HOW TO GIVE ADVICE.
HEY, I NEED YOUR MONK SENSIBILITIES. SO, WHAT ELSE SHOULD I TELL SUPER D TO GET HIM OUT OF HIS DEPRESSION?
TELL HIM LIKE IT IS AND REMEMBER HIS SPIRIT!
THAT SOUNDS VERY OPRAH.
UM, DON'T YOU HAVE STUFF FROM THE LAMA?
GET WITH THE PROGRAM! OPRAH RULES!

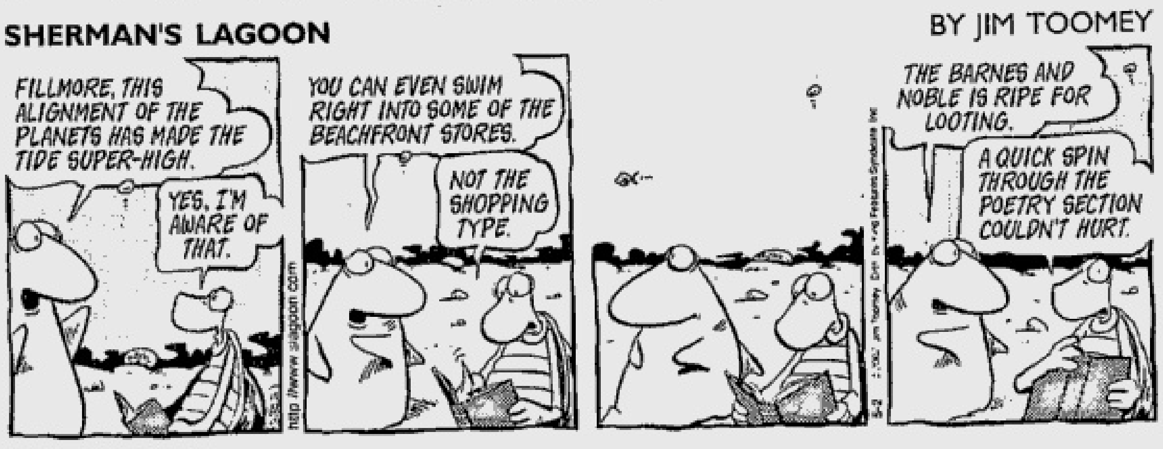
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


IBINENTA KO 'YUNG MOTORSIKLO NG ANAK KO AT BINILI KO S'YA NG BISIKLETA.
HEALTHY NA, SAFE PA.
HINDI KO LANG MAINTINDIHAN KUNG BAKIT HINDI MAKUNTENTO ANG MGA KABATAAN SA PA-PEDAL-PEDAL LANG.
PMJR0502
MUKHANG HEALTHY AND SAFE NGA.

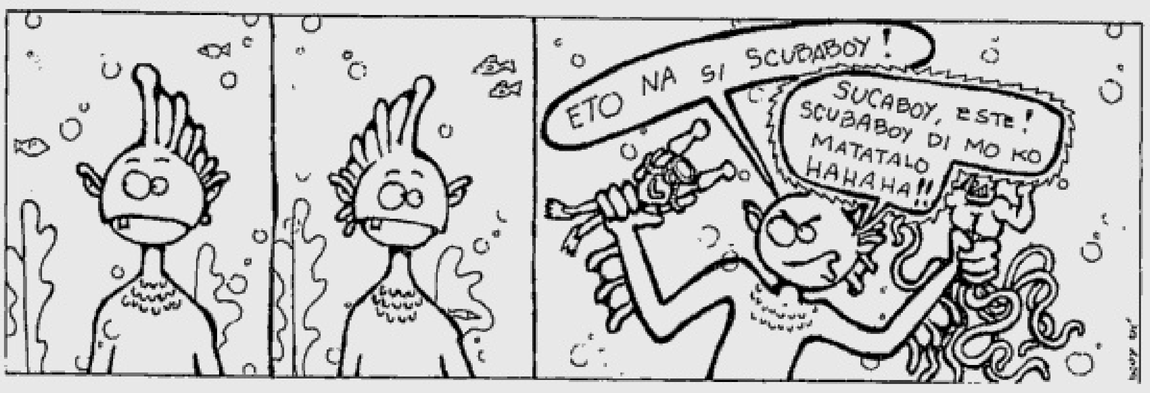
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


FILLMORE, THIS ALIGNMENT OF THE PLANETS HAS MADE THE TIDE SUPER-HIGH.
YES, I'M AWARE OF THAT.
http://www.slagoon.com
YOU CAN EVEN SWIM RIGHT INTO SOME OF THE BEACHFRONT STORES.
NOT THE SHOPPING TYPE.
5-2
THE BARNES AND NOBLE IS RIPE FOR LOOTING.
A QUICK SPIN THROUGH THE POETRY SECTION COULDN'T HURT.

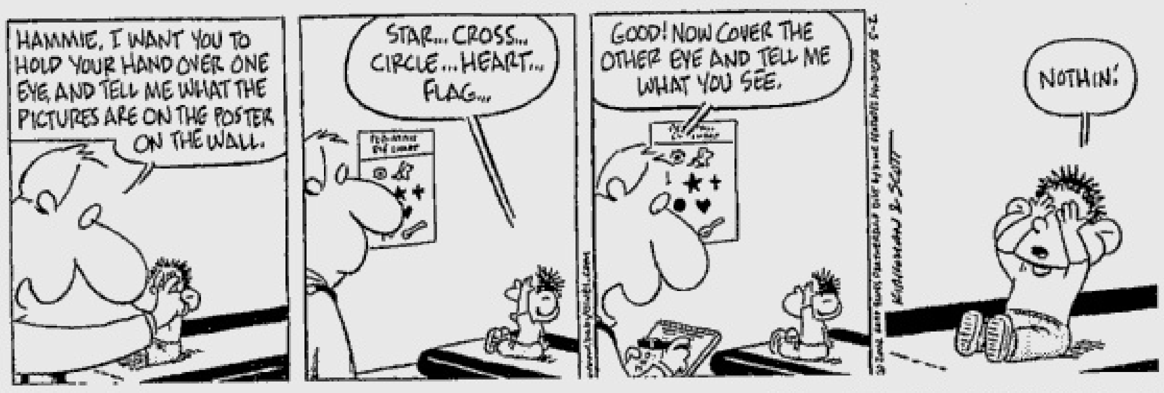
CHICHOY CHOKOY

BY IKOY RICIO


ETO NA SI SCUBABOY!
SUCABOY, ESTE! SCUBABOY DI MO KO MATATALO HAHAHA!!

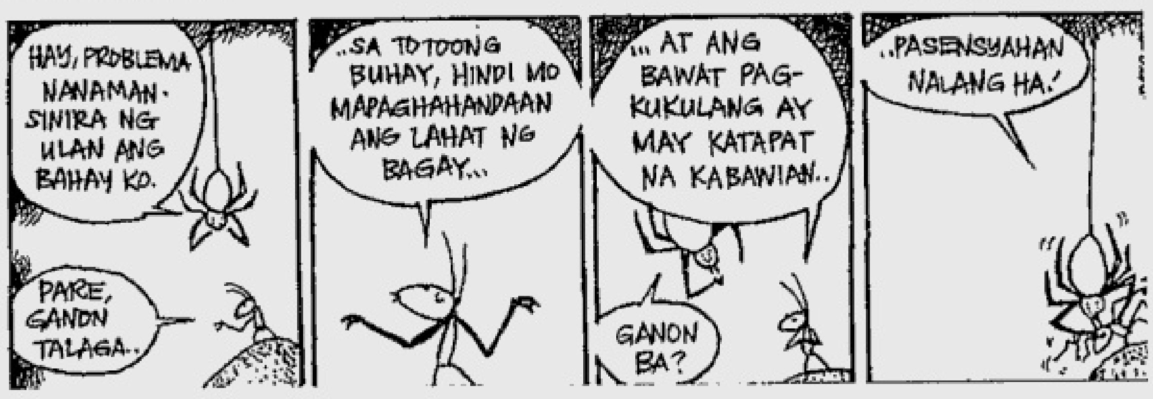
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


HAMMIE, I WANT YOU TO HOLD YOUR HAND OVER ONE EYE, AND TELL ME WHAT THE PICTURES ARE ON THE POSTER ON THE WALL.
STAR... CROSS... CIRCLE... HEART... FLAG...
GOOD! NOW COVER THE OTHER EYE AND TELL ME WHAT YOU SEE.
KIRKMAN & SCOTT
NOTHIN'.

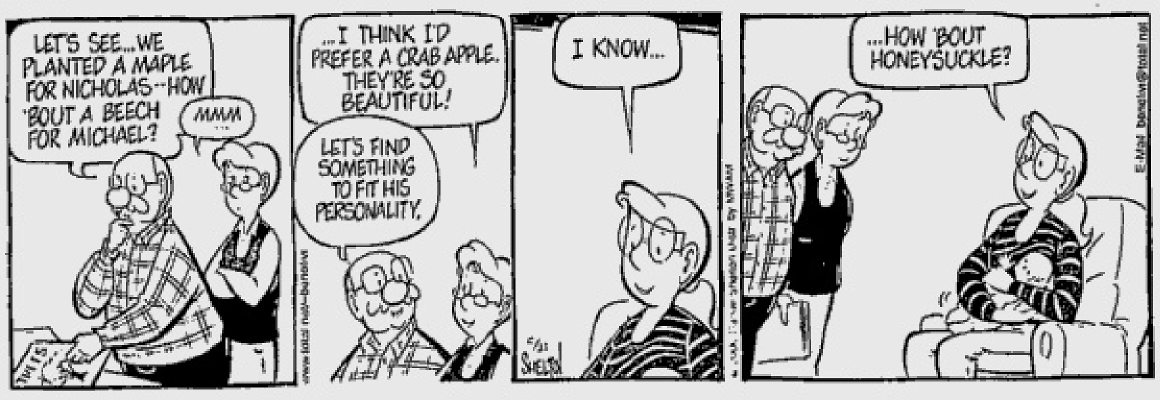
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


HAY, PROBLEMA NANAMAN. SINIRA NG ULAN ANG BAHAY KO.
PARE, GANON TALAGA..
..SA TOTOONG BUHAY, HINDI MO MAPAGHAHANDAAN ANG LAHAT NG BAGAY...
... AT ANG BAWAT PAGKUKULANG AY MAY KATAPAT NA KABAWIAN..
GANON BA?
..PASENSYAHAN NALANG HA.'

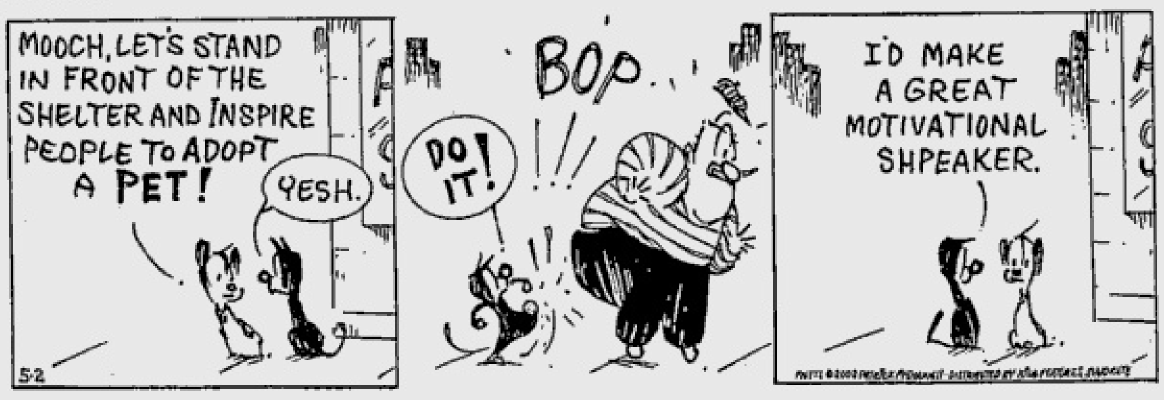
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


LET'S SEE... WE PLANTED A MAPLE FOR NICHOLAS--HOW 'BOUT A BEECH FOR MICHAEL?
MMM
...I THINK I'D PREFER A CRAB APPLE. THEY'RE SO BEAUTIFUL!
LET'S FIND SOMETHING TO FIT HIS PERSONALITY.
I KNOW...
...HOW 'BOUT HONEYSUCKLE?

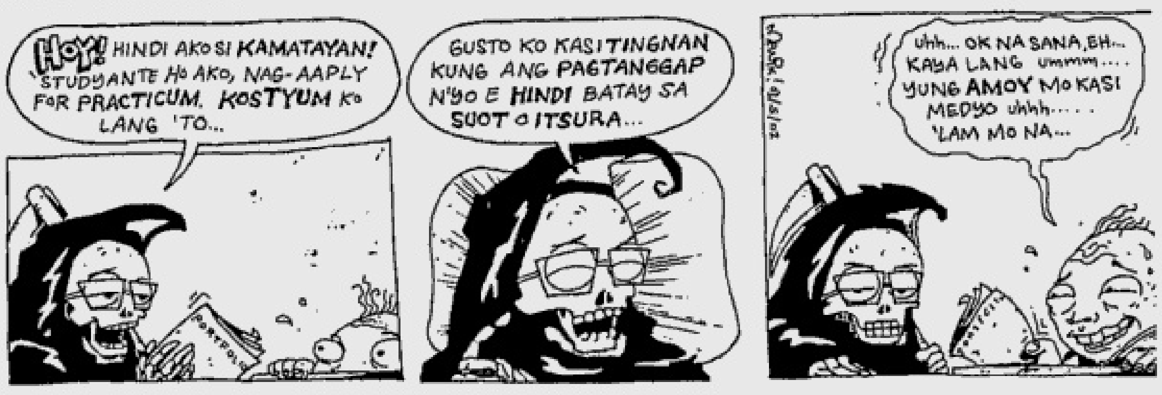
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


MOOCH, LET'S STAND IN FRONT OF THE SHELTER AND INSPIRE PEOPLE TO ADOPT A PET!
YESH.
5-2
BOP..
DO IT!
I'D MAKE A GREAT MOTIVATIONAL SHPEAKER.

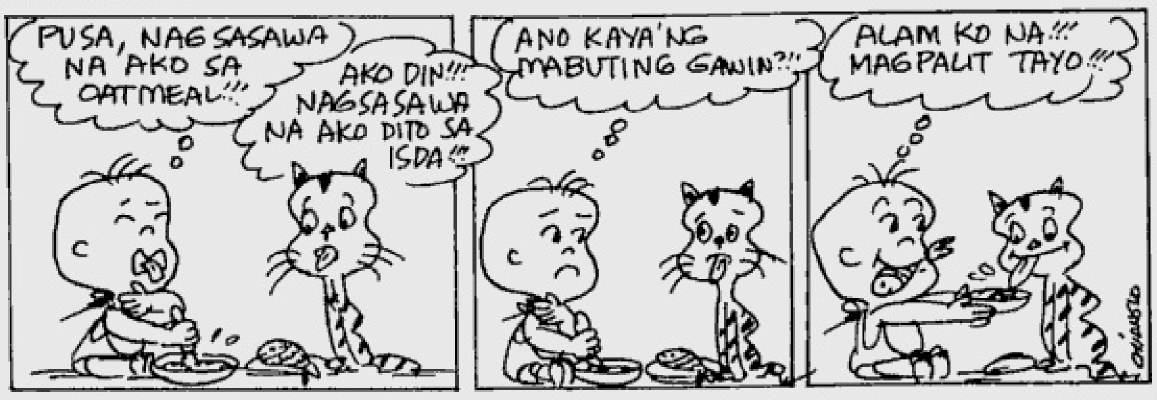
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


HOY! HINDI AKO SI KAMATAYAN! STUDYANTE HO AKO, NAG-AAPLY FOR PRACTICUM. KOSTYUM KO LANG 'TO...
GUSTO KO KASI TINGNAN KUNG ANG PAGTANGGAP N'YO E HINDI BATAY SA SUOT O ITSURA...
uhh... OK NA SANA, EH... KAYA LANG ummm.... YUNG AMOY MO KASI MEDYO uhhh.... 'LAM MO NA...

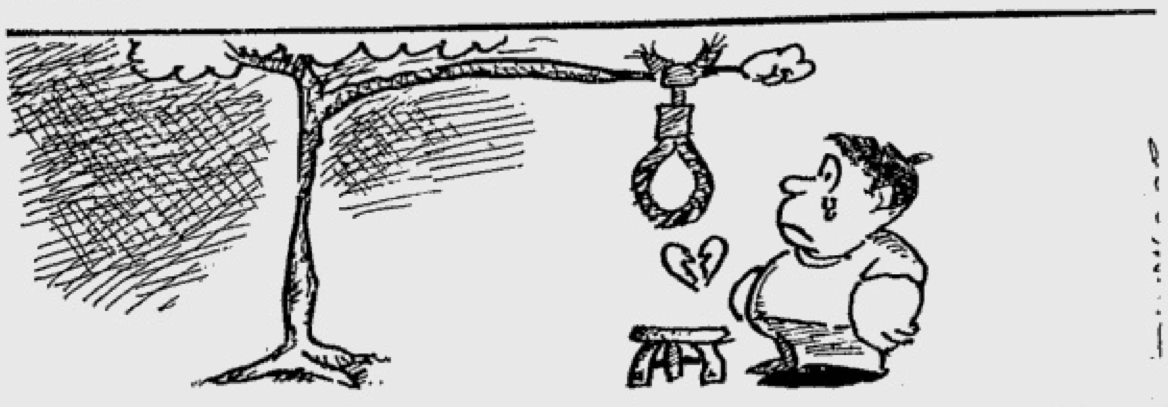
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


PUSA, NAGSASAWA NA AKO SA OATMEAL!!!
AKO DIN!!! NAGSASAWA NA AKO DITO SA ISDA!!!
ANO KAYA'NG MABUTING GAWIN?!!
ALAM KO NA!!! MAGPALIT TAYO!!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING



HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Bianca Jagger, Larry Gatlin, Bing Crosby, Lesley Gore

Happy Birthday: Take advantage of any opportunities to travel in order to expand your cultural arts knowledge. Your ability to reason in relationships will give you the edge when it comes to helping others, as well as in making your own life decisions. This is a year of change and one in which you should be looking for peace . Your numbers are 8, 17, 26, 32, 38, 41

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Time to straighten out your home, or to relax and rejuvenate. Self-improvement programs started today will pay off. Your best work will be done at home.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): You should be opening up to all sorts of new ideas and philosophies today. The more receptive you are, the more you'll learn.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Make your move financially today. You can get involved in business partnerships that will bring you added knowledge and opportunity.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Your emotions will be close to the surface today and could cause you to overreact to a small and trivial occurrence. Work quietly on your own for best results and refrain from letting others in on your intentions.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Your contribution at work today will put you ahead of the crowd and probably lead to advancement. Investments made today will be lucrative if you put your money into some sort of product.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): If you socialize with people who work in the same industry as you do you will pick up some great ideas and form interesting relationships. You've got nothing to lose and everything to gain today.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Difficulties will develop if you shirk your duties. Don't let your personal life interfere with your work. You have the discipline to finish what you start.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Concentrate on moneymaking opportunities and good ideas will unfold. Physical activity will lead to meeting people with similar interests.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Don't let money matters get the better of you. Personal relationships may need to be dealt with even though you don't want to discuss the way you feel. Once you do, you'll feel better.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You will be feeling a little vulnerable today. You may find that co-workers or employers will upset you if you confront a situation that is less than efficient.

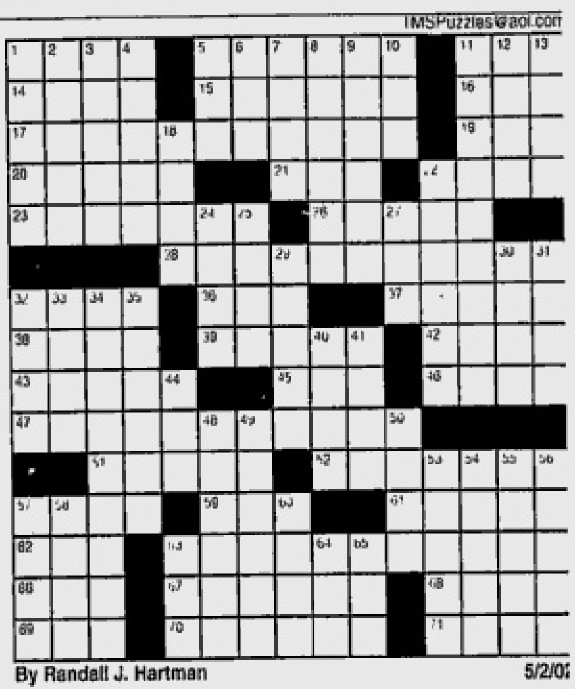
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Your involvement in unusual or obscure groups will lead to all sorts of interesting pastimes. You will be able to broaden your outlook and become more accepting of others .

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Creative opportunities are present but only if you push yourself. You have so much to contribute to groups you believe in but if you don't motivate yourself nothing will get done.

Birthday Baby: You will get involved in serious intellectual careers requiring concentration, detail and precision. You will become a lifelong student, always seeking greater knowledge. Your best relations will be with serious-minded individuals who share your interests.

DAILY CROSSWORD

IMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Randall J. Hartman
Escondido, CA

5/2/02

ACROSS
1 Writer Harte
5 Nebraska river
11 Jazz date
14 Goneril's father
15 "Luncheon of the Boating Party" painter
16 Altar vow
17 Start of patient's complaint
19 Old Olds
20 Roman dictator
21 '50s candidate for pres.
22 Prelude to a duel
23 Adler and Benson
26 Songs for two
28 End of patient's complaint
32 Custard dessert
36 Likewise
37 Sleep noisily
38 Ancient letter
39 Chair designer
42 Frank Herbert sci-fi classic
43 Consume with relish
45 Long duration
46 Pipe piece
47 Start of doctor's response
51 Master
52 Bitter irony
57 Burn slightly
59 Sch. grp.
61 Bloody channel
62 Focal point
63 End of doctor's response
66 In the past
67 Book before Hosea
68 Woods for Woods' woods?
69 Part of rpm
70 Underhanded
71 Out of work

DOWN
1 Ecstasy
2 Attempt to disprove
3 "Guitar Town" singer Steve
4 Fairy-tale villain
5 Fix beginning?
6 NASA buggy
7 Writer Seton
8 Holy city?
9 Keeps occupied
10 Work unit
11 Brownie graduate
12 Brainstorm
13 Gunky stuff
18 Hindu goddess
22 Pedestals
24 Pot starter
25 Pericles' portico
27 Ernie of the links
29 1981 John Lennon song
30 Shore eagle
31 Appear
32 Radio fig.
33 Maui bash
34 Opposing unions
35 Neither male nor female
40 __ Benedict
41 Stiff hair
44 Org. of Price and Love
48 Foundling
49 Speak mechanically
50 Spoken
53 Raccoonlike carnivore
54 Bowed
55 Girder stuff
56 Billiards shot
57 Yorkshire fellow
58 Colossal
60 One continent
63 6-pointers
64 Spider-spotter's cry
65 Double over

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

S	P	U	R	S		O	M	A	N		S	E	E	P
A	E	S	O	P		P	A	G	E		A	R	L	O
D	E	A	D	A	S	A	D	O	O	R	N	A	I	L
A	V	G		C	O	L	A			A	D	D		
T	E	E	T	E	R		S	S	T	S		I	S	M
			U	M	A		A	T	O	P		C	P	A
S	A	M	B	A		A	M	O	S			A	I	L
C	L	E	A	N	A	S	A	W	H	I	S	T	L	E
R	O	T			B	Y	R	E		N	O	E	L	S
A	N	A		A	L	E	C		P	U	N			
P	E	P		M	E	T	H		A	N	G	I	N	A
		H	O	I			H	O	L	D		G	A	S
P	R	O	U	D	A	S	A	P	E	A	C	O	C	K
O	U	R	S		S	I	R	E		T	E	R	R	E
T	E	S	T		S	T	E	N		E	A	S	E	D

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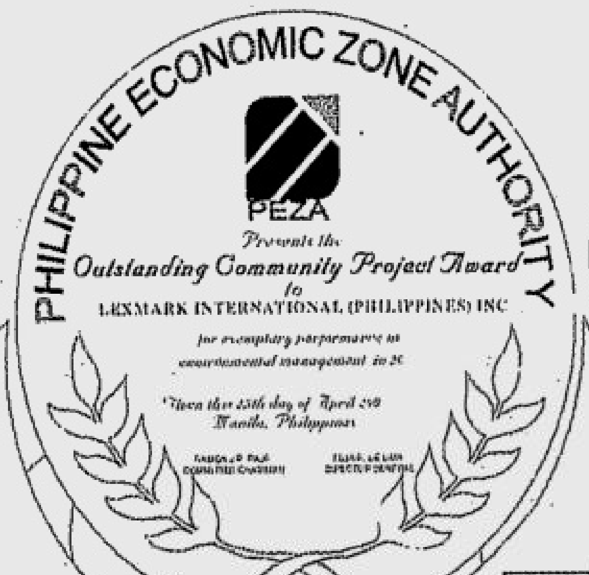
5/2/02

Congratulations
to
LEXMARK™
INTERNATIONAL (PHILIPPINES), INC.

Customers For Life
We make it happen.


PHILIPPINE ECONOMIC ZONE AUTHORITY
PEZA
Presents the
Outstanding Community Project Award
to
LEXMARK INTERNATIONAL (PHILIPPINES) INC
for exemplary performance in
environmental management in 20
Given this 25th day of April 20
Manila, Philippines

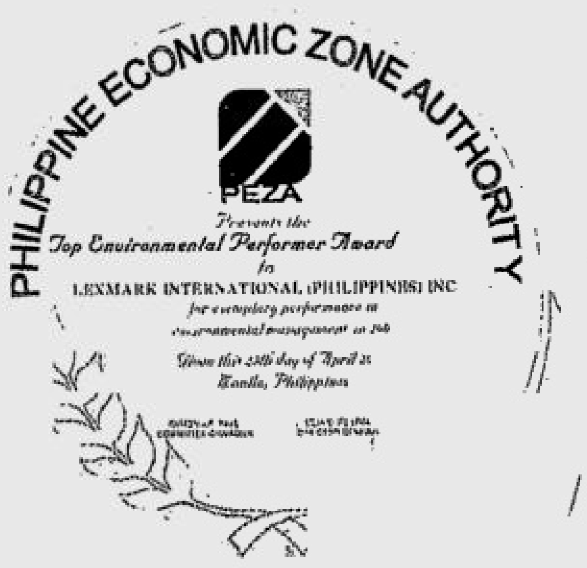
OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY PROJECT AWARDEE

Secretary, Department of Trade & Industr
Chairman, PEZA
KEYNOTE SPEAKER
Investor's ition Night
thority

LIPI Delegates: (from left to right) Ms. Emie Simbahon, Ink Mix and Environmental Management Manager, Ms. Lilibeth Medina, Chemical Engineer, Mr. Glenn Westerman, CEO/President and Mr. Jun Sarmiento, Environmental Management Coordinator - pose with Hon. Manuel A. Roxas, Secretary of Trade and Industry and PEZA Director General, Ms. Lilia de Lima.

MABUHA
HON. MANUEL A. ROX

From left to right: Mr. Jon Villaflor, LIPI Plant Manger - CA, Ms. Emie Simbahon, LIPI Ink Mix and Environmental Management Manager, Ms. Lilibeth Medina, LIPI Chemical Engineer, Hon. Manuel A. Roxas II, Ms. Lori Rago, LIPI HR Director, Mr. Glenn Westerman, LIPI CEO/President, Hon. Lilia de Lima, PEZA Director General, Mr. Jun Sarmiento Jr., LIPI Environmental Management Coordinator.


PHILIPPINE ECONOMIC ZONE AUTHORITY
PEZA
Presents the
Top Environmental Performer Award
to
LEXMARK INTERNATIONAL (PHILIPPINES) INC
for exemplary performance in
environmental management in 20
Given this 25th day of April 2
Manila, Philippines

KEYNOTE SPEAKER
Investor's Recognition Night

Ms. Lori Rago,LIPI HR Director, Mr. Glenn Westerman, LIPI CEO/President and Mr. Jon Villaflor, LIPI Plant Manager - CA receive the awards from Hon. Manuel A. Roxas II and Director General Lilia de Lima.

TOP ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNITY PROJECT AWARDEE

Of the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA), Year 2001

BRUSHING the dumplings with egg wash before steaming.

CATHAY Pacific's Bettina Palpallatoc, surrounded by Star Life editor Millet Mananquil, Spring Moon chef Yip Wing Wah and Bulletin Life and Leisure editor Ethel Timbol, gets her turn at flattening dough to make into wrapper.

Spring for the best dumplings in HK

It looks like child's play when Peninsula chef Yip Wing Wah makes dumplings but wait until you try it

By Chelo Banal-Formoso

SPRING Moon is the name of the Chinese restaurant in The Peninsula, the oldest and grandest hotel in Hong Kong. Epicures and seasoned travelers say it is the best dumpling ground in the Crown Colony. That's why the Spring Moon kitchen makes 8,000 pieces of dumplings every day, and that's just for lunch.

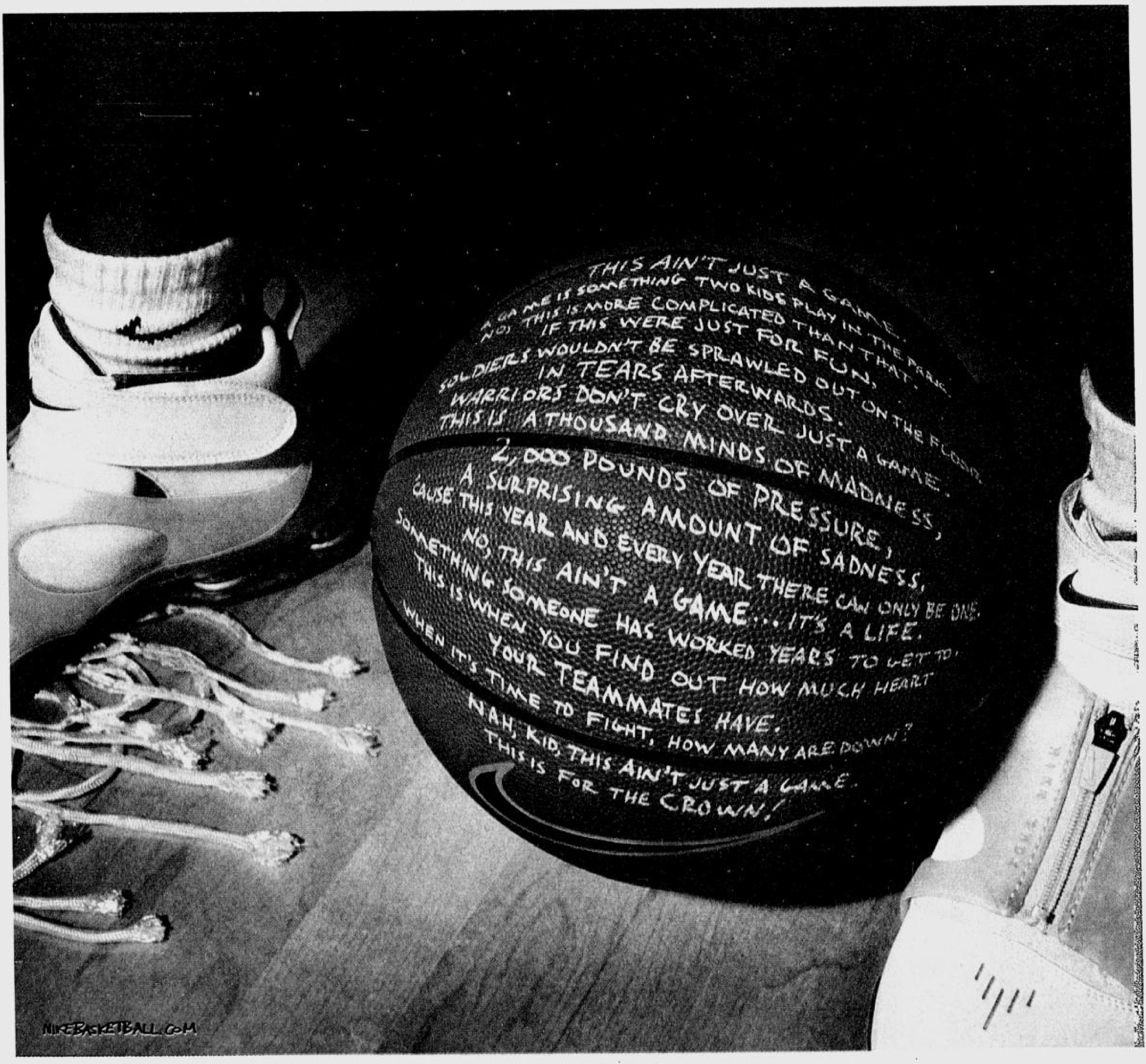
The good news is that these tiny treasures come out of a spotless kitchen, a gleaming, state-of-the-art, industrial-strength fort manned by experienced chefs.

As you're enjoying bite after bite of these teeny-weeny pillows filled with minced pork or shrimp and mushroom or bamboo shoots, you don't have to worry about the circumstances surrounding their creation. Lifestyle editors from Manila spent one morning at the Spring Moon kitchen making dumplings under the watchful eye of its head chef and after eating what they made lived to tell the story. If that's not a minor miracle, then it's practical magic.

It isn't every day that readers are made

SPRING/ p.C5

CHEF shows how to make purse-shaped dumplings.


THIS AIN'T JUST A GAME.
A GAME IS SOMETHING TWO KIDS PLAY IN THE PARK.
NO, THIS IS MORE COMPLICATED THAN THAT.
IF THIS WERE JUST FOR FUN,
SOLDIERS WOULDN'T BE SPRAWLED OUT ON THE FLOOR,
IN TEARS AFTERWARDS.
WARRIORS DON'T CRY OVER JUST A GAME.
THIS IS A THOUSAND MINDS OF MADNESS,
2,000 POUNDS OF PRESSURE,
A SURPRISING AMOUNT OF SADNESS,
'CAUSE THIS YEAR AND EVERY YEAR THERE CAN ONLY BE ONE.
NO, THIS AIN'T A GAME... IT'S A LIFE.
SOMETHING SOMEONE HAS WORKED YEARS TO GET TO.
THIS IS WHEN YOU FIND OUT HOW MUCH HEART
YOUR TEAMMATES HAVE.
WHEN IT'S TIME TO FIGHT, HOW MANY ARE DOWN?
NAH, KID, THIS AIN'T JUST A GAME.
THIS IS FOR THE CROWN!
NIKEBASKETBALL.COM

Dream a little dream of strawberry sorbet and frog's legs

BARTENDER Kumaran Subranum and waiter Harrison Kim Yew Wai preparing the dessert

Text and photos by Chelo Banal Formoso

ONE of the perks of being a Lifestyle journalist is that you get invited to all the best places and you get to dine on the creations of high-flying, celebrity-type chefs who have years of experience behind them. Sometimes, though, there's joy in eating a meal prepared on-the-spot by an unknown chef, served in earnest and with a prayer by a young waiter all in two hours.

For me, the most impressive part of the Food and Hotel Asia (FHA) 2002 international exposition, which was held recently in Singapore, was not that there were six huge halls wall-to-wall with exhibitors and jampacked with buyers nor the logistics in putting up such an enterprise—although that almost took the cake—but that the organizers thought of introducing this year what they dubbed as the Dream Team Challenge at the 13th FHA Culinary Challenge.

> This on-the-spot competition at the FHA 2002 was a culinary adventure for both competitors and their guests from the media

With Edvarcl Heng, who wrote for the Singapore-based Cuisine and Wine Scene, and Lisa Williams, managing editor of the Grocers' Review in New Zealand, I was invited to dine on the meal prepared for the Dream Team Challenge by the Phoenix Spirit team, a trio of bartender, waiter and chef from the Phoenix Hotel Singapore.

Let me note now that it was the kind of meal that you'd call "fine dining" around here and for which you'd have to pay an arm and a leg in any reputable restaurant. We were served pre-lunch cocktail drink, apéritif, appetizer, entrée, dessert and coffee—the works, in other words, the whole satisfactory shebang, such that I half-expected fireworks to cap the meal.

Each team consisting of a bartender, a waiter and a chef was supposed to "prepare an F&B experience within two hours for three diners and a professional judge at one table in a café setting."

Before you think light of that challenge, take this into consideration: from the moment you bring in your ingredients, wines, water, crockery, cutlery and linen on through your setting of the table; from the moment you uncork the wine to the time you put away the dishes; at every instant that you're prepping and cooking, you are being watched and judged by professional chefs, F&B managers and restaurateurs. Add to that kind of pressure the careless whispers among the spectators who'd start streaming into Hall 2 every day at noontime for a ringside view of the competitions. And remember, too, that there was a time limit.

DREAM/ p.D4

LIGHT and fruity pre-lunch cocktail drink

HEALTH CONSCIOUS?
Yes, everyone should be.

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'Cooking is a team experience'

From page D8

Nigel Webber (coach), Dena Macroux, Todd Lindsay, Matt Crawford, Trevor Stayer and Andrew Fang cooked Apple Wood Smoked Skate Wing Wrapped Scallop, Pan-Fried White Corn, Arugula Salad and Basil Cream Sauce for appetizer and, for entrée, Mushroom Farce Crusted Veal Tenderloin, Oka Artichoke Gratin Potato and a Medley of Vegetables ***(See recipes)***.

The appetizer won a bronze medal in the Food Hotel Asia 2002, aside from the nine medals NAIT won in different categories.

For their part, CCA's chef and instructor Philippe Agnesse and students Rachelle Gonzales, Pinky Gutierrez, Bernardo Liganor Jr., Michelle Marmita, Johanna See, Michelle Sy, Jing Trinidad and Pamela Yu prepared Yoghurt Blanc-Manger with Verbena Jelly and Mandarin Leek Sherbet.

CCA chef and instructor Philippe Agnesse, CCA chef Gene Cordova and NAIT chef Trevor Stayer talk about Stayer's gelatin creation.

Lechelt observed that the CCA students are "enthusiastic, happy, very polite, clean and have good knowledge of what they're doing. The instructors, too, are very good."

"It's very satisfying for us to see young people committed to the profession. There's no doubt it's hard work but there is always room for advancement, and people make their own destiny by working hard," said Varshney.

Below are NAIT's recipes of Apple Wood Smoked Skate Wing Wrapped Scallop with Pan-Fried White Corn, Arugula Salad and Basil Cream Sauce and Mushroom Farce Crusted Veal Tenderloin with Oka Artichoke Gratin Potato and Medley of Vegetables.

Apple Wood Smoked Skate Wing Wrapped Scallop

2 kg skate wing
2 kg scallops
50 each lemongrass
500 g sugar
500 ml water

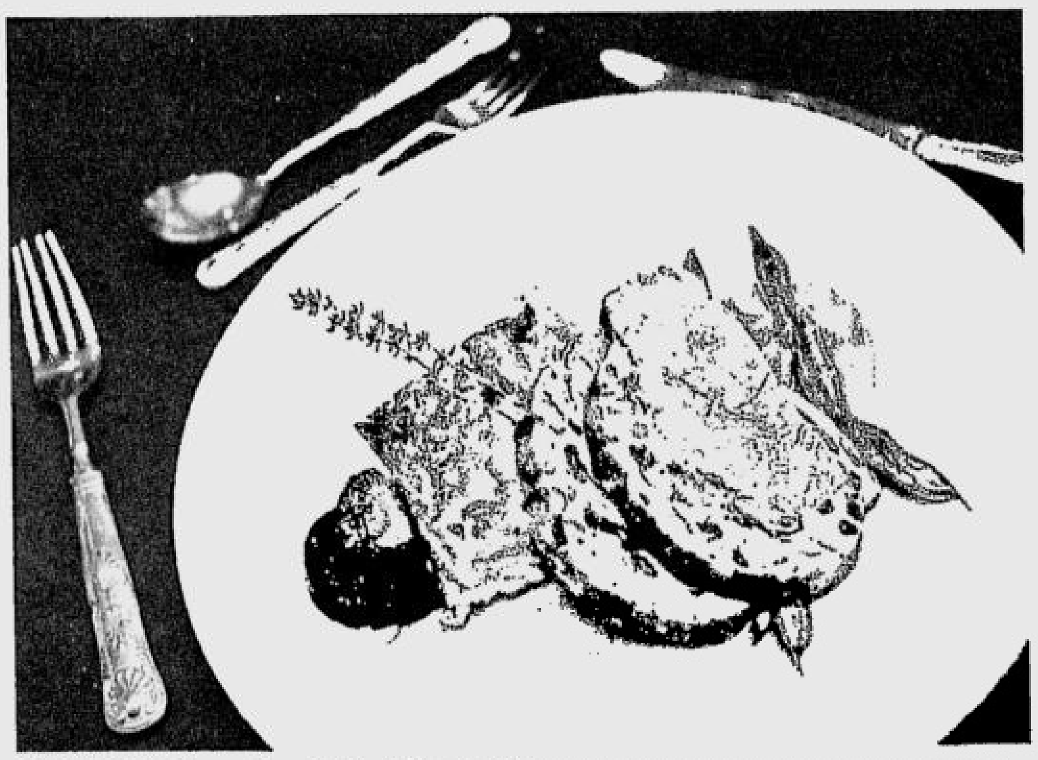
Clean skate wings, scallop and lemon grass. Smoke skate wing with apple wood for approximately 1 hour. Cut skate in 4 strips. Take a strip of skate wing, wrap a scallop, skewer with lemon grass. Boil sugar, water and lemongrass scraps; reduce to syrup. Sear wrapped scallops in hot oil until golden brown and cook. Season with salt and pepper. Brush lemongrass syrup on top before serving.

NAIT'S winning recipe: Apple Wood Smoked Skate Wing Wrapped Scallop, Pan-Fried White Corn and Arugula Salad and Basil Cream Sauce

> Take it from this Canadian crew: Chefs must be able to work under pressure and overlook the irritability of others in the kitchen because the goal is to serve a delicious meal promptly

Pan-Fried White Corn/Arugula Salad and Basil Cream Sauce

2 kg white corn
1 case arugula or watercress
500 g garlic
1 case Roma tomato
Salt to taste
Pepper to taste
250 g thyme (fresh)
1 kg shallot
500 g garlic, minced
500 g basil leaves, rough chop
100 g curry powder
2 li heavy cream
200 g Dijon mustard



MUSHROOM Farce Crusted Veal Tenderloin, Oka Artichoke Gratin Potato, Medley of Vegetables by NAIT

Sauté white corn in hot oil until golden brown. Add salt, pepper, roasted garlic and thyme. Before serving, add diced tomato and arugula. Mix well until arugula is just cooked. Sweat shallots in butter—no color, add garlic, Dijon mustard, basil, curry powder and cream. Season with salt and pepper. Cook until cream has reduced into sauce consistency.

Mushroom Farce Crusted Veal Tenderloin

3 kg veal tenderloin
2 kg chicken breast heavy cream
2 kg oyster mushroom
2 kg shiitake mushroom
2 kg portabello mushroom
100 g salt
200 g pepper
200 g sage, chopped fine
200 g chives, chopped fine
200 g oregano, chopped fine

Clean tenderloin. Sauté mushroom mix and keep them in cooler until required. Purée chicken breast and cream. Add mushroom mix, herbs and seasoning. Sear tenderloin in hot oil, crusted with farce meat and in the oven at 230°C (450°F) for approximately 20 minutes. Rest before serving.

Oka Artichoke Gratin Potato

1 case Yukon potato, thinly sliced
1 kg artichoke, diced
2 kg Oka cheese or morbier cheese (Fr)
1 kg Parmesan cheese
500 g roasted garlic
3 li heavy cream
Salt to taste
Pepper to taste

Slice potatoes 2-3 mm; do not rinse off starch. Sauté diced artichoke. Heat cream, salt and pepper in a small pot. Add potatoes and bring to a boil to precook a bit, making sure that cream covers potatoes. Turn off heat when mixture is thickened. Take potato slices out of cream and arrange nicely in ramekin. Layer potatoes with garlic, cheese and artichoke. Then spoon cream mixture over the top. Bake at 200°C (350°F) for approximately 15 minutes before serving.

Sauce:
30 li dark veal stock

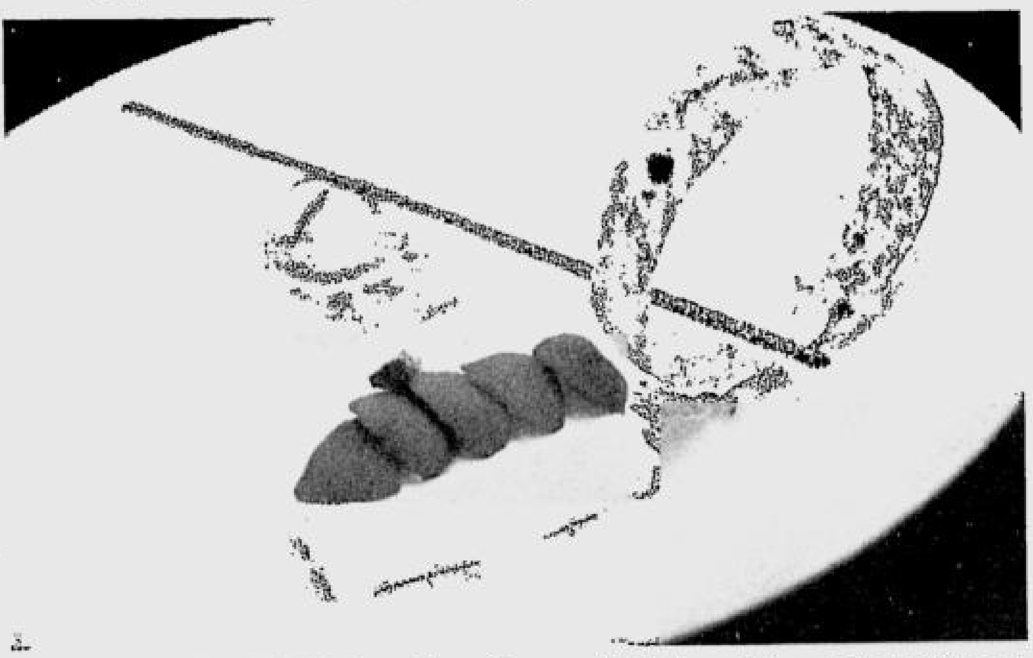
Reconstitute dried mushrooms in warm water for about 10 minutes; rinse twice. Sweat shallot, then garlic. Add port wine and reduce. Add veal reduction, demi glaze and mushroom. Reduce to sauce consistency. Season with salt and pepper.

Medley of Vegetables

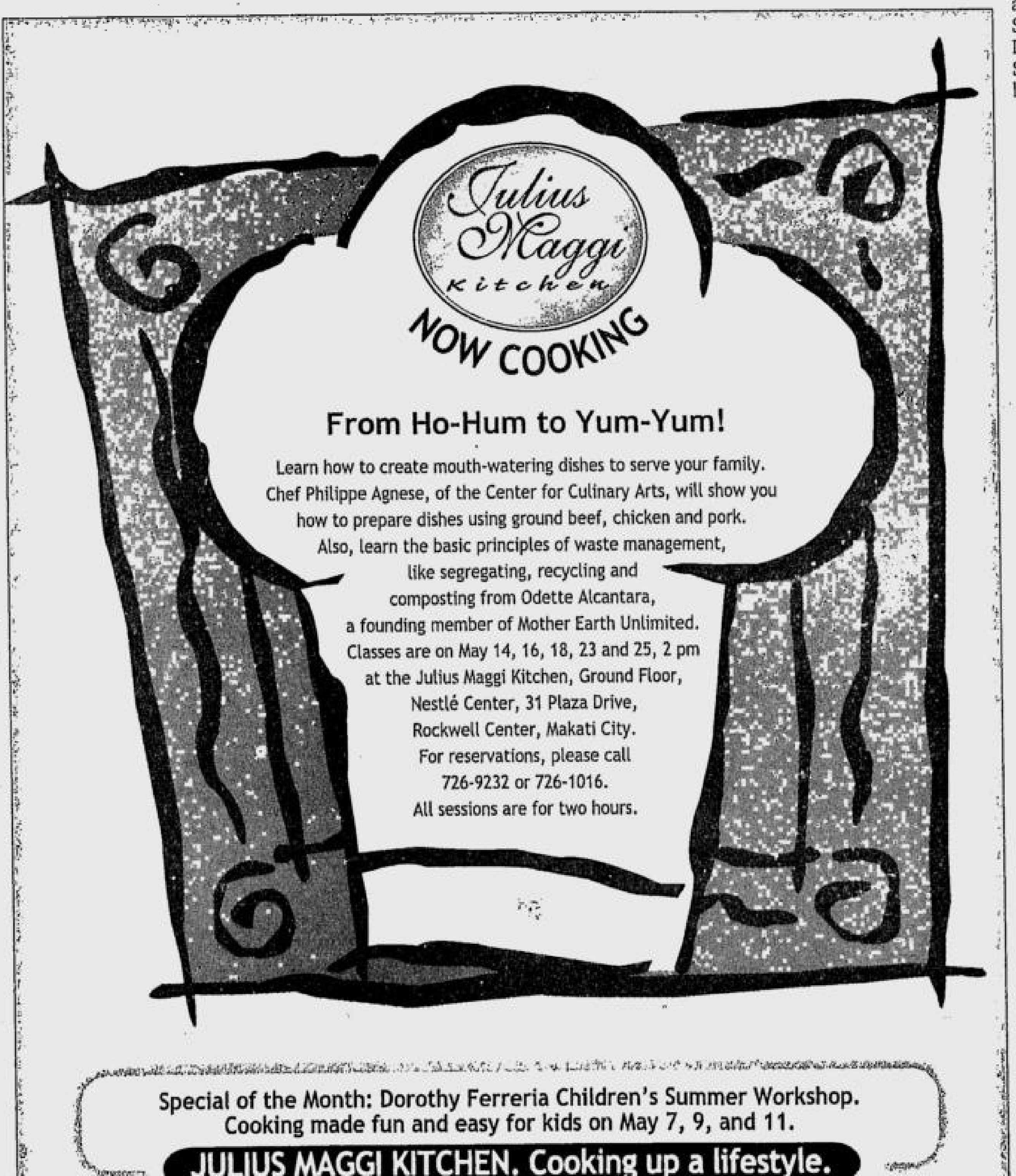
1 case endive
2 case green bean
3 kg oven-dry tomato
200 g roasted garlic
100 g thyme
1 li olive oil
1 case baby carrot
1 case candy cane beet
1 case pearl onion

Cut endive in 4. Sear in hot oil until golden brown. Add water or chicken stock, braise until tender. Take off the water and keep them in cool place until required. Peel seeded tomato. Dry in the oven for 2 hours at 200°F. Rough chop tomato, add fresh thyme, salt, pepper and olive oil; keep them in room temperature. Roast onion for 25 minutes until golden brown. Boil candy cane beet until cooked and peeled after. Blanch green beans and baby carrot for approximately 4-5 minutes until cooked. Reheat endive, green beans and carrots in butter. Season with salt and pepper. Sauté onion and beet with balsamic vinegar.

E-mail the author at rburgos@inquirer.com.ph



CCA Manila Baking 101's Yoghurt Blanc-Manger with Verbena Jelly and Mandarin Leek Sherbet



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SUN, SEA and Jollibee

FROM LEFT, Antonnette Escario, Jollibee Ayala Center Cebu store marketing officer; Jonx Jongco, Jollibee Ayala Center Cebu marketing services manager; and Louann Bacolod, Islands Souvenirs marketing manager

Promo offers free local trips

SUMMER is the perfect time to enjoy beautiful beaches, go to your dream destination or spend time with your family in the provinces. To add more cheer to activities you have planned this summer, Jollibee recently launched "Sun, Sea and Jollibee" promo that gives everybody a chance to win free trips around the country.

Joan Optina, marketing services manager of Jollibee Visayas and Mindanao, and Joel Villamayor, local store marketing manager of Jollibee, are excited with this new promo in line with their "Bee Happy" advertising campaign.

Every P100 purchase at any Jollibee outlet entitles you to a raffle game trail card. Fill out the card with three stamps that is equivalent to three visits and drop it in designated boxes. Lucky winners from Luzon will win free trips for two to Iloilo, Bacolod, Cebu, Boracay, Dumaguete, Cagayan de Oro and Davao, while winners from Visayas and Mindanao will get free trips to Manila.

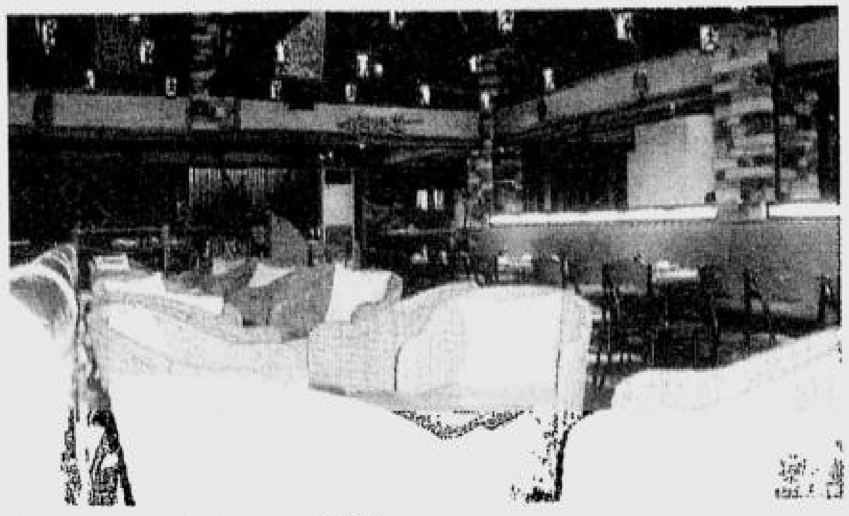
Islands Souvenirs will provide the winners with summer apparel. A one-stop souvenir shop, Islands Souvenirs continues to promote the different festivals and cultural traditions of the country by creating unique designs for their T-shirt line.

Lyndon Angan, vice president for marketing of Islands Souvenirs, says they are delighted with the promotional partnership they have with Jollibee. "The promo complements our brand since the shops can be found in key cities all over the country. I am certain all winners will enjoy our apparel."

Promo ends May 15.

Restaurant satisfies diners' huge appetite

THE CONGO Grille *kare-kare*



THE CONGO Grille lounge area

CONGO Grille Bar & Restaurant is the latest exciting place to open in Makati City. Sprawled on a 700-sq-m lot on Pasay Road near the corner of Amorsolo Street, Congo Grille Makati tops the other two outlets in Timog, QC and El Pueblo, Ortigas. Its two floors can accommodate more than 600 customers. There's a function room that can seat 10-150 persons on the second floor. It's perfect for conferences, birthday celebrations, family reunions, wedding receptions and other special occasions. There's also a lounge section with big wicker chairs and an al fresco portion where customers can dine in a relaxed garden-type setting.

Congo Grille also boasts of basement parking big enough for as much as 20 cars, complete with valet service.

The restaurant serves a mixed group of customers, office workers on weekdays and family and *barkadas* on weekends. It is almost always full during lunch and especially at night.

What attracts people to Congo Grille is the variety and affordability of its menu. Bestsellers are *sisig*, crispy *pata*, *bulalo*, *kare-kare*, tuna belly, grilled *pusit* and blue marlin. There's also Tuna Tail, an alternative to crispy *pata* for the more health-conscious diners, and Congo Rice, which is served with squid ink and topped with *calamares*. For dessert, Congo Mango and Frozen Maki are recommended. Beer, meanwhile, is pegged at only P26 per bottle.

Call 750-9312/2444.

VEAL and Tuna Surf and Turf

CHICKEN Gyoza

Bar marks 10th year with raffle

SIDEBAR Café, "where real people make good company," is now 10 years old. It started out as a side bar beside Chateau 1771 on M. Adriatico, Malate in 1991 and soon opened an El Pueblo branch in Ortigas in 1995.

To celebrate this occasion, Sidebar will be giving away cool and exciting prizes to its patrons with the "Sidebar@10" raffle promo. Get the chance to win loads of prizes, such as CDs and wine (weekly draw), Sony mobile phones, Sony Discman, Sony mini walkman, Canon cameras and accommodation at Pearl of the Pacific in Boracay Island (monthly draw) and an I-Book 500 (grand draw).

Visit Sidebar Malate or Sidebar Ortigas El Pueblo. For every P500 dine-in purchase or P1,000 worth of food and drinks on in-house functions, guests will receive a P50 reward coupon that may be used on food purchase or as a raffle coupon. Reward coupons may be used on succeeding visits except on Fridays. It cannot be used along with other in-house promos of the outlets and are not convertible to cash. All "Sidebar@10" prizes are tax-free.

Promo runs until July 19 at Sidebar Malate and Sidebar El Pueblo.

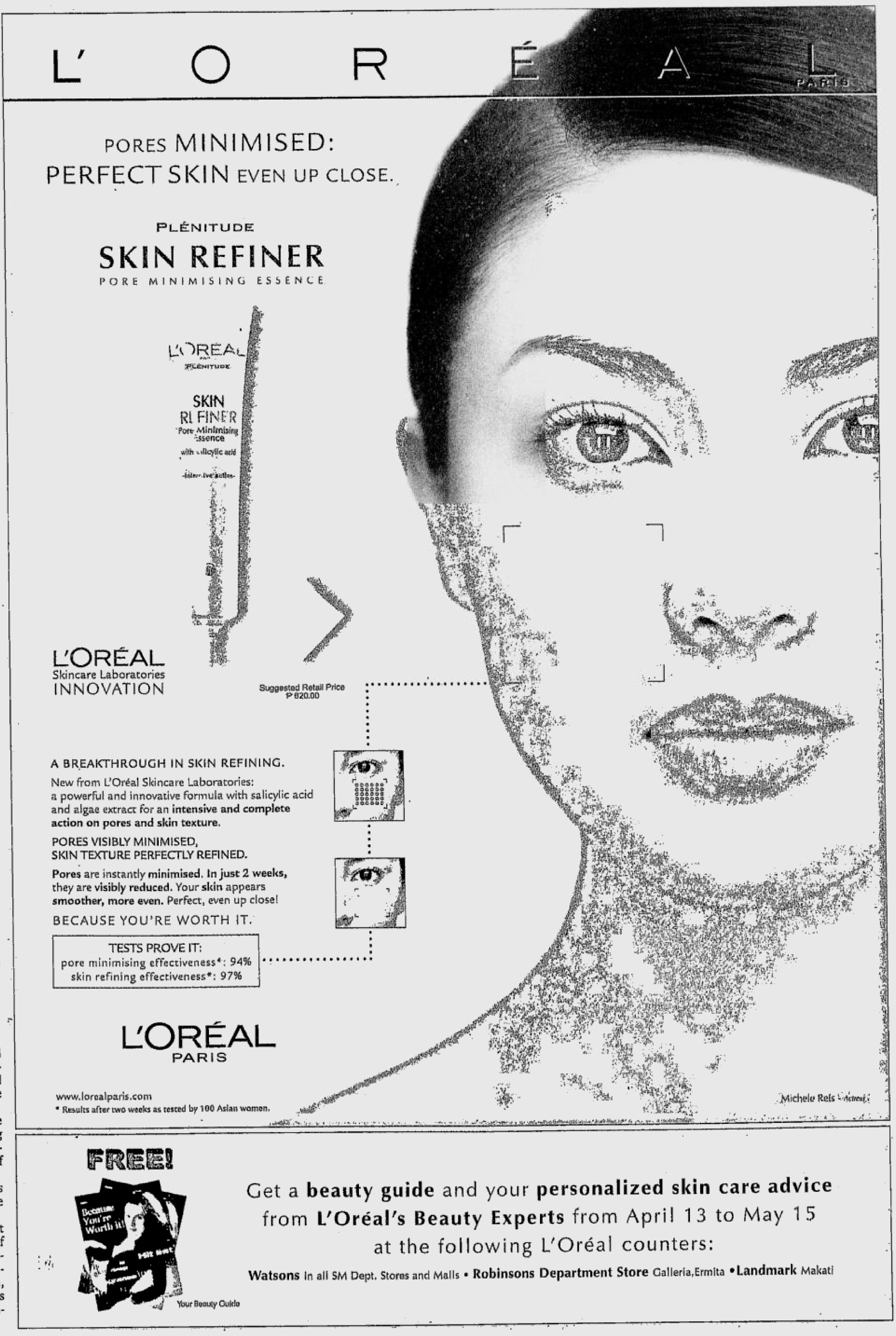
Trolley treats

THE NAME itself connotes a fun, festive and playful mood. And that's exactly how the husband-and-wife tandem of Bong and Rachel Torres envisioned their business to be like nearly four years ago.

According to Rachel, this idea was borne out of the personal experience in attending children's parties. "We've been to a lot of kiddie parties and I noticed there was a lack of party gimmicks."

Bong adds, "What we wanted to create was the atmosphere of an amusement park like Disneyland or Enchanted Kingdom."

Starting in May 1998, Trolley Treats is not like your typical party cart. It has a variety of food offerings: cotton candy, hotdog and popcorn, nachos and burritos. Although they admit the food they offer are quite common, they say the "key to it all is how they 'dress them up' and make it appear to be more interesting to eat." Call 372-2088/3921.



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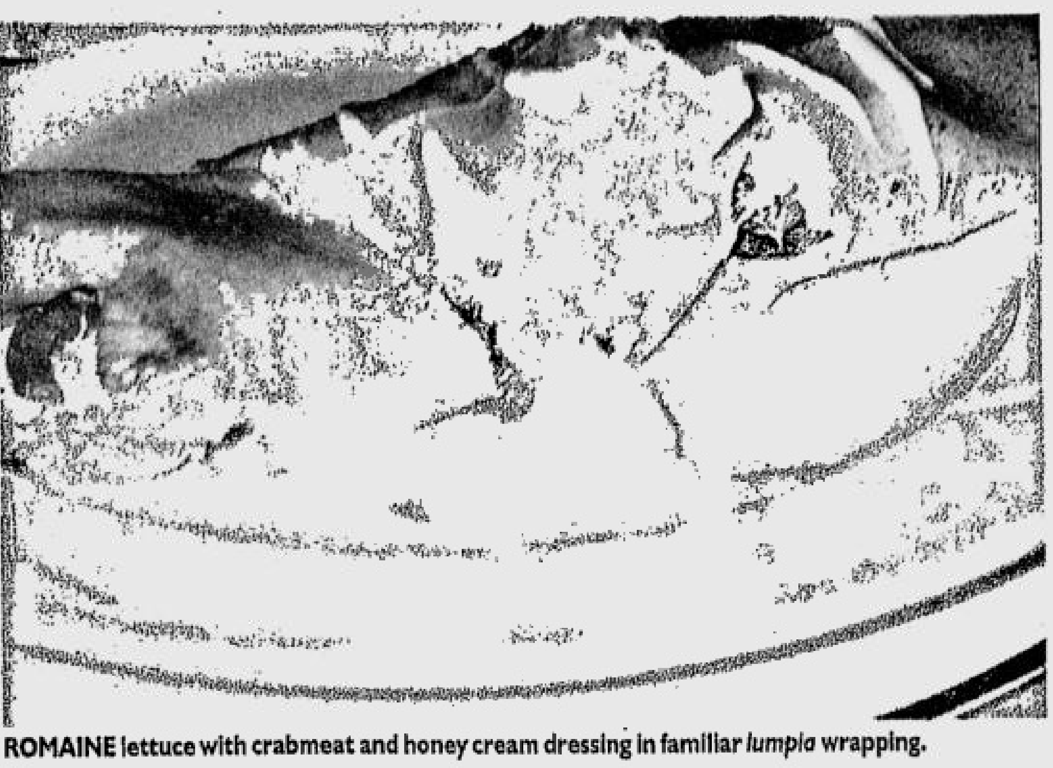

ROMAINE lettuce with crabmeat and honey cream dressing in familiar *lumpia* wrapping.

TROPICAL strawberry sorbet

Dream a little dream of strawberry sorbet and frog's legs

From page D1

Our bartender, Kumaran Subranum, mixed and served a light and fruity pre-lunch cocktail—an original creation, mind you—and recommended a Paul Buecher 1996 Riesling to go with the main course. Waiter Harrison Kim Yew Wai set the table, tossed the salad of Romaine lettuce with crabmeat and honey cream dressing, and managed to wrap each serving in a *lumpia* wrapper with the use of chopsticks. But not without a snag because he did drop one of the sticks. By the second roll, however, he was relaxed and did beautifully.

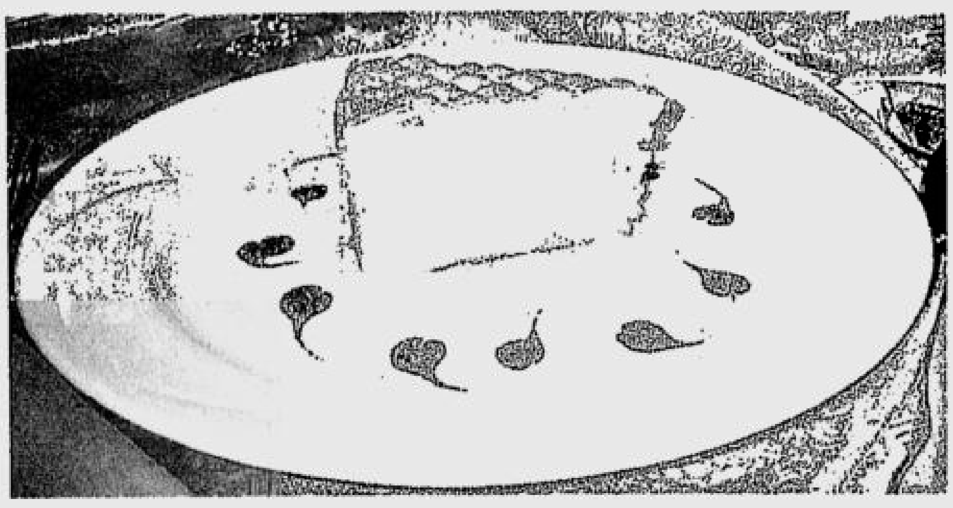
Did I just dream it or did it happen that between the appetizer and the entrée came a surprise? It was an apéritif of strawberry sorbet cleverly presented in an antique Chinese tea pot. The team had put steamed dry ice in the teapot and served the sorbet in the inverted lid so when it reached the table, there was smoke coming out of the pot.

Meanwhile, Chef Andy kept busy in the background preparing our entrée. You know how they say there's a first time for everything? Well, for the first time in my life, I ate frog's legs. I didn't have the heart to refuse and cause the team minus points—and I was glad I didn't. They were tender and tasty, the frog's legs, I mean. Braised in wine and chicken ginseng essence, and served with friend onions and sprouts over mashed sweet potatoes, they were transformed into a prince of a dish.

Dessert was a light chiffon cake drizzled with strawberry cream dressing. For finale, the bartender concocted flambé coffee for us, with a touch of liquor.

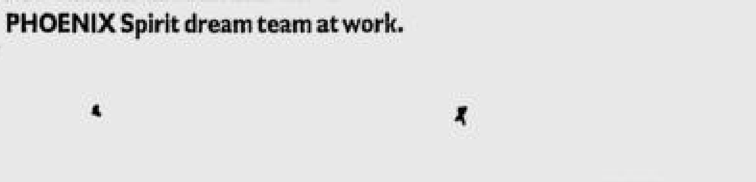
Although they had been watching each team closely and tasted the food themselves, the judges asked the diners what they thought of the food and the way they were served. We had nothing but praises for the Phoenix Spirit team, of course, because they deserved praises. Unfortunately, they didn't win. Oh well, they dared to dream and, for them and for us, the adventure was well worth it.

E-mail the author at cbformoso @inquirer.com.ph


SIMPLE chiffon cake with berry-flavored drizzle

FLAMBÉ coffee

TENDER frog's legs braised in wine and chicken ginseng essence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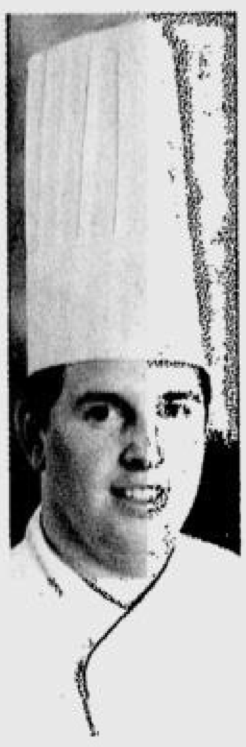


EXECUTIVE Chef Christopher Romine

Diners have a greater say in what they want to eat at the Island Café, thanks to its new chef

SMOKED Norwegian salmon and other seafood selections

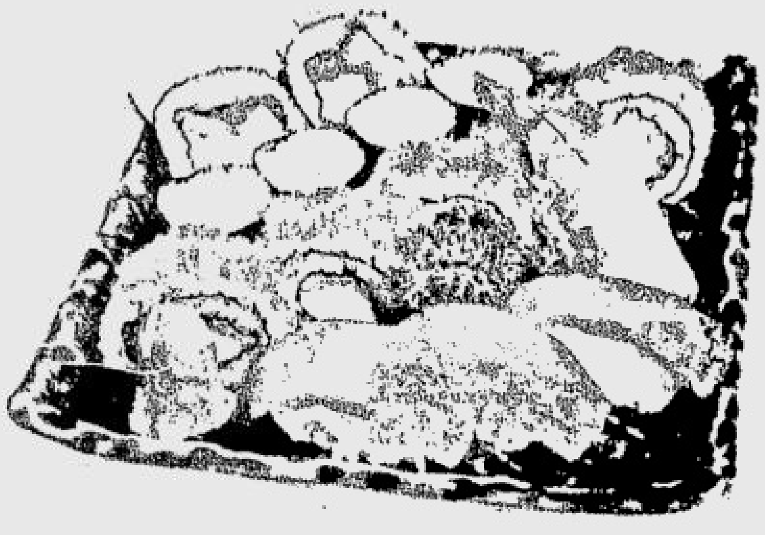
Interactive dining takes you higher

By Alex Y. Vergara

THEY'RE light, individual and interactive. These best describe the Island Café's new buffet offerings at Makati Shangri-La (tel. 813-8888) as whipped up by newly appointed Executive Chef Christopher Romine.

The American chef from Pittsburgh recently joined Shangri-La after a culinary career of more than 13 years at various Ritz Carlton properties the world over, including stints in Atlanta, the West Coast, Seoul and Hawaii. Romine's previous stint as executive chef was in Cancun, Mexico.

"I want to take diners to the next level," he says, "with an all-new buffet that offers different flavors and experiences. We're serving more individualized dishes through several interactive stations."



ISLAND Café's sushi selections

Sushi and sashimi preparations, for instance, are no longer heaped in one or two platters. Instead, the well-loved Japanese staples are now showcased in a prominent area and prepared fresh by a sushi chef.

More of the sushi and less of the maki? Less raw fish and more steamed seafood? Diners can go for whatever combination they fancy. "Service is also more personalized," he says.

Seafood Friday

Friday, a day devoted to seafood, features oysters as fresh as the day they've been harvested. Unlike most seafood restaurants, the Island Café only opens oysters upon order to keep them from becoming dry.

Even dessert lovers now have a choice. When we visited Island Café, the crème brûlée station offered not one but four types of fresh and preserved toppings—mango, raspberry, strawberry and coconut.

Romine's interactive stations won't be complete without one featuring a favorite Filipino dish—*pancit*. Diners can savor, say, *pancit luglog* or *mami* cooked right before their eyes.

"*Pancit* has always been my favorite ever since my wife started cooking it in the family," says Romine, who's married to Filipino-American Janeth Fronda of Cagayan. "I really had to include it when I was doing the menu."

He has somehow found a way to feature his other Filipino favorite—*adobo* with a twist. Monday's buffet, for instance, includes tender, juicy squid *adobo* cooked the traditional way.

"I do classical dishes using different ingredients," says Romine. "I'm not into fusion dishes."

A bit of every place

Romine's peripatetic career, however, is evident in the lineup of dishes featured during a particular day. On top of the de rigueur pasta station, for instance, a corner features Mexican fast-food dishes every Monday—from tacos to beef and chicken fajitas. Of course, a buffet won't be complete without a carving station featuring a juicy slab of American beef.

What guides him in the selection of dishes? Romine says he tries to take a bit of a place he has been to and share it with others. His preference for Asian cuisine, for instance, is manifested in his style of cooking—light on the palate and easy on the tummy.

Each day, by the way, features a particular region or gastronomic experience: Monday, international; Tuesday, Asian; Wednesday, Mediterranean; Thursday, European; Friday, seafood; Saturday, Thai and Chinese.

On a more personal note, he met Janeth during his stint in Hawaii several years ago. They now have two sons, Christian, 2, and Christopher, 5 months. Romine had to drop his plans of working somewhere in Asia when Makati Shangri-La's offer came.

"My wife and I welcome this development," he says. "I'm very happy to be based here." The 33-year-old executive chef also has big plans for the hotel's other food and beverage outlets, except perhaps the Shang Palace. Aside from promoting interactive dining, Romine is quite hands-on in the kitchen as well.

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph

CAKES and other dessert concoctions

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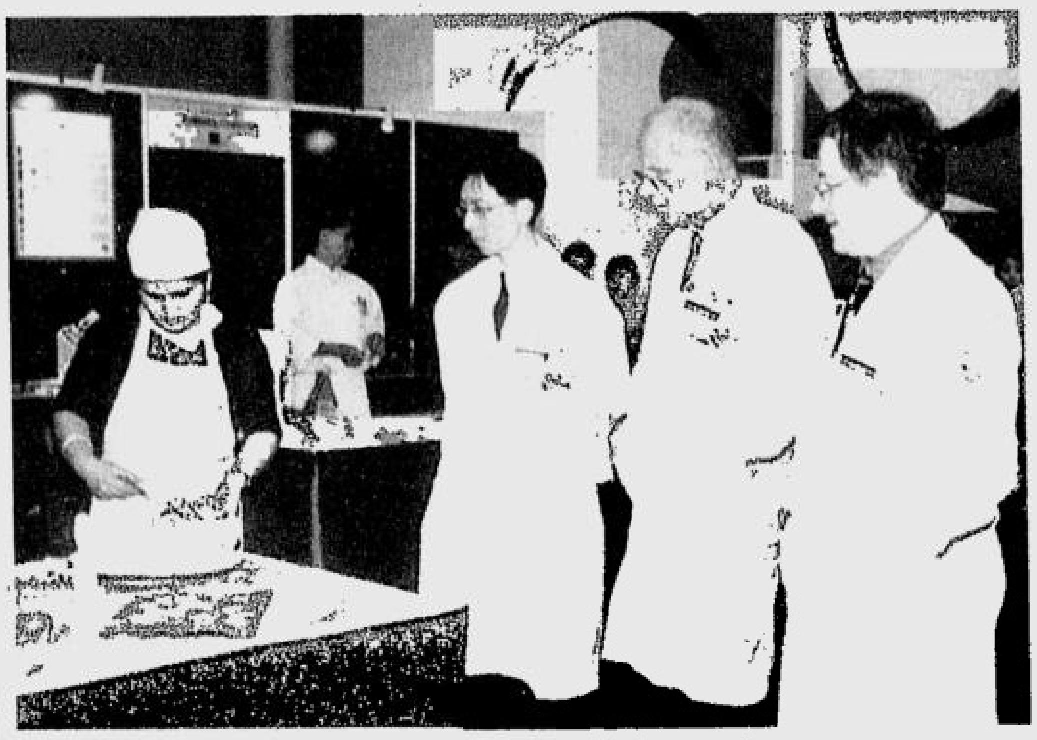
BONDING chefs over in Hall 5.

PHOTO BY CHELO BANAL-FORMOSO



JUDGING chefs evaluate how a female contestant dresses a cake.

Chefs, chefs, glorious chefs

HALF a million chefs left their kitchens and showed up in Singapore for the well-attended FHA2002. They were literally all over the place, and it wasn't a small place either. There they were in their classic white coats and their tapered aprons, wearing their signature toques, as they gave their well-applauded performances—competing, judging, cooking, or conducting demos for food and equipment suppliers, and finding time for bonding with their culinary comrades from 23 countries.

Chefs from 16 international chef associations competed individually or in teams for awards in live cooking, cold food table display (from buffet platters to desserts), vegetable carving, cake dressing—name it, they faced it. Young chefs found their own adventure in the Red Pocket on-the-spot Chinese cooking competition.

"People are enticed to eat through visual presentations, so the food has to be appealing to the eye. It also has to have the right concept, nutritional value, composition, texture, and the most important factor for a dish is, of course, its taste," said Otto Weibel, president of the Singapore Chefs Association who led 50 chefs in judging the various competitions in the FHA2002 Culinary Challenge.

As culinary teams and individual competitors were awarded, national flags were hoisted and stars were born.

Unlike the Oscars, Versace and friends didn't make a killing dressing up the awardees. All that the stars here needed were their white coats and toques.

Chelo Banal-Formoso

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DEMONSTRATING chefs try out new equipment.

PHOTO BY CHELO BANAL-FORMOSO

Hail to the men in white, and the women too, who were the stars of the FHA2002

OBSERVING chefs take note of cold table displays.

TOQUES in a row

PHOTO BY CHELO BANAL-FORMOSO

CARVING chef fashions dragons out of veggies.

COMPETING chefs in the petit fours corner

MEN in white plus two women—the delegation from Switzerland

TASTEMAKERS

PAELLA Valenciana

New grill and seafood restaurant opens tomorrow

PEPE and Julio, the newest grill and seafood restaurant in Quezon City, will open tomorrow, 6 p.m.

Pepe and Julio is owned by *balikbayans* Julius Gamilla, a former executive vice president of a hotel and restaurant chain in New York, and Jose de la Paz, a former New York police detective. They have decided to settle in the Philippines.

Pepe and Julio offers Filipino cuisine from recipes carefully planned by its experienced chefs. A bamboo garden setting welcomes diners who want to enjoy their meals outdoors while air-conditioned function rooms are reserved for those who prefer a quiet lunch or dinner.

Pepe and Julio, located at 121 Panay Ave., also provides catering services for all occasions. Call 373-0774.

A chef's experience: Off to sea and back on land

WHAT'S it like to be a chef on board a "city at sea"?

Gordon Landy, the Peninsula Manila's executive chef, recently experienced life as guest chef in the world-famous Queen Elizabeth 2 (QE 2) as it traveled from Hong Kong en route to Laem Chabang, Thailand.

While on board, Landy conducted cooking classes for passengers who are best described as well-traveled guests, luminaries from the movies, theater and literary world, members of royalty and travelers from all walks of life. As part of this weeklong stint, Landy's signature menu was featured in the luxury liner's different restaurants—the Queen's Grill, Princess Grill and Britannic Grill.

Landy impressed the equally impressive guests with a starter of Oriental Gravlax with Soba Noodle Salad and Miso followed by Cream of Forest Mushroom with Herbed Goat's Cheese Crisps and a main course of Pan-Roasted Beef Tenderloin with Foie Gras, Fava Beans and Shallot Confit with a Merlot Reduction. The whole meal is topped off with a Combination of Hot and Cold Dark Chocolate with Cherry and White Chocolate Sauce.

PEN'S executive chef Gordon Landy

The QE 2 voyage was organized by Cunard, whose elegant traditions of White Star Service have become famous for years. The ship boasts of many unique features that makes it a destination in itself, being the only ship offering regular transatlantic crossings, providing entertainment, a full-service spa, a variety of food and beverage choices, and houses the only seagoing branch of Harrods.

With all these amenities and comforts on board, however, Landy is happy to be back in his The Peninsula Manila. The hotel is likewise glad to have the captain of all its kitchens back.

New chef asks staff to think like diners

ANTONIO "Tony" Palmero, the new executive chef of City Garden Suites Manila (tel. 536-1451 to -64), brings over 30 years of expertise in culinary arts with him.

"I always ask my staff to think and expect like a customer. If as a customer they can honestly say that the food is worth their money, they can then serve the food on the table," says Palmero, who acquired his culinary arts education at the Salzburger Culinary School in Austria.

Part of his newest food offerings for the Café Miranda of City Garden Suites is the Sumptuous International Buffet, which features International Buffet on Mondays, Mongolian Barbecue on Tuesdays, Barbecue Buffet on Wednesdays, Mongolian Buffet on Thursdays, and Seafood Buffet on Fridays. For P300 net per person, the buffet consists of soup, colds and salads, hot items, desserts and bottomless beverage. It is offered 6-10 a.m. for breakfast and 11:30 a.m.-to 2:30 p.m. for lunch.

There is also the à la carte selection available every day for a minimal package of P250 at the Café Miranda. Some of the preferred dishes included in the menu are the Surf and Turf, which consists of jumbo prawns and tenderloin steak, Sesame-coated Chicken Tenderloin, King Fish Tanigue in sauce and Prawns with Mango cocktail.

Palmero uses only the freshest ingredients in the market from local suppliers.

Youth's first choice for food and fun

T.G.I. Friday's spells loads of food and fun. Take it from those who attended the launching party of INQ7's newest baby, YOU, a new community for the interactive youth that has news, opinion and feature stories. When it comes to hip youth-oriented happenings, Friday's makes it doubly fun.

Hundreds lined up for a string of games (including the thrilling E-mazing relay game), a musical feast provided by the country's top bands: Rivermaya and South Border. The friendly Friday's staff led by general manager Lilet Joven gave everyone a tummy-filling experience with platters of Friday's dishes served nonstop to all revelers.

T.G.I. Friday's has branches at Glorietta, Robinsons Place Manila, Hotel Rembrandt in Quezon City, Alabang Town Center and Sta. Lucia East.

THE FRIDAY'S staff led by general manager Lilet Martinez (second from right) serve the kiddie guests at the launching of YOU.

Everyday is a
Fry Day

Know a place where every day's "Fry Day"? Just check it out around the corner to find out.

10 Years of Fry Days

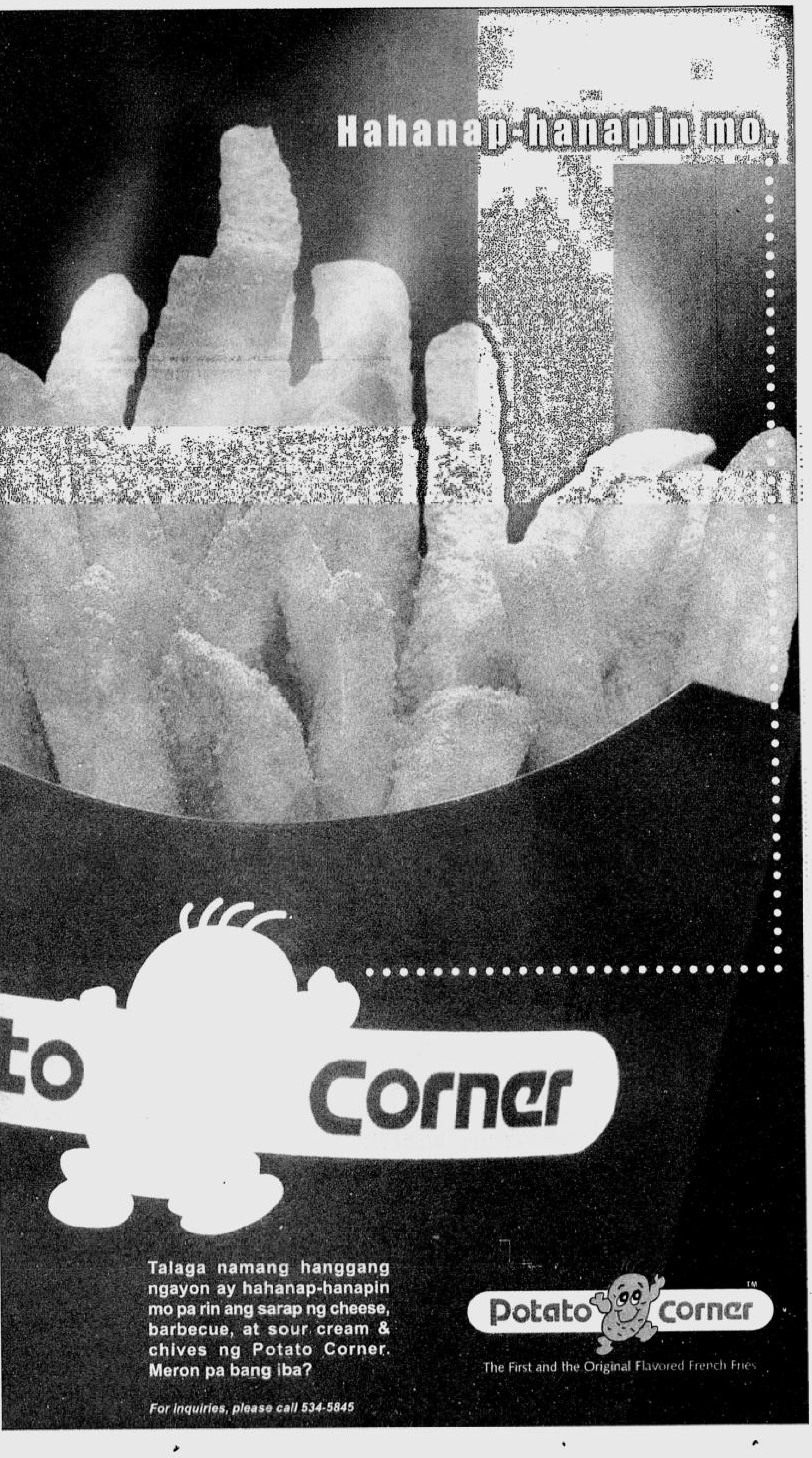
For a decade now, Potato Corner has been frying its way to everyone's hearts with its flavored French fries. Pass by it and you won't resist trying a few with the aroma of flavoured potato fries filling the air. SO what is it in Potato Corner that makes it so addicting, you'd constantly crave for it? Because it's not just your ordinary fries that you dip in catsup. With Potato Corner, you won't even have to dip the fries just to give them more taste. Just choose from any Potato Corner's flavourful coatings – Cheese, Barbecue, and Sour Cream & Chives. All capturing the taste that most Pinoy's want – salty in Cheese, spicy in Barbecue, and a hint of sour-sweet in Sour Cream & Chives. What more can you ask for? And that's just the French fries for starters. Potato Corner even has other potato varieties like baked potatoes, hash browns, and the loopy fries. More to savor, more to choose from. And all the more reason why you should get into potato craze right now.

Catch the Big Fry and make it Big Time!

Not only is Potato Corner a good snack or siding. It's also a great business concept! Since its inception in 1992, the food sector has recognized Potato Corner as one of the highest ranking and most successful businesses ever to hit the Philippine market. Four years following its launch, the industry saw hundreds of businesses coming up with the same flavoured fries theme. But as they say, the original is always the best.. Today, potato Corner prides itself with a growing number of franchise outlets nationwide. It's no wonder why it reigns supreme in the flavored fries industry and remains a favorite among Filipinos. You could be the next privileged franchise to enjoy the success many have discovered in Potato Corner too!

The next time your tummy asks for fries, you know where to look – that familiar green kiosk with the cute potato mascot just around the corner – Potato Corner, that is there anything better than the first and the original flavored French fries.?

For more inquiries, call Potato Corner at 534-55845.



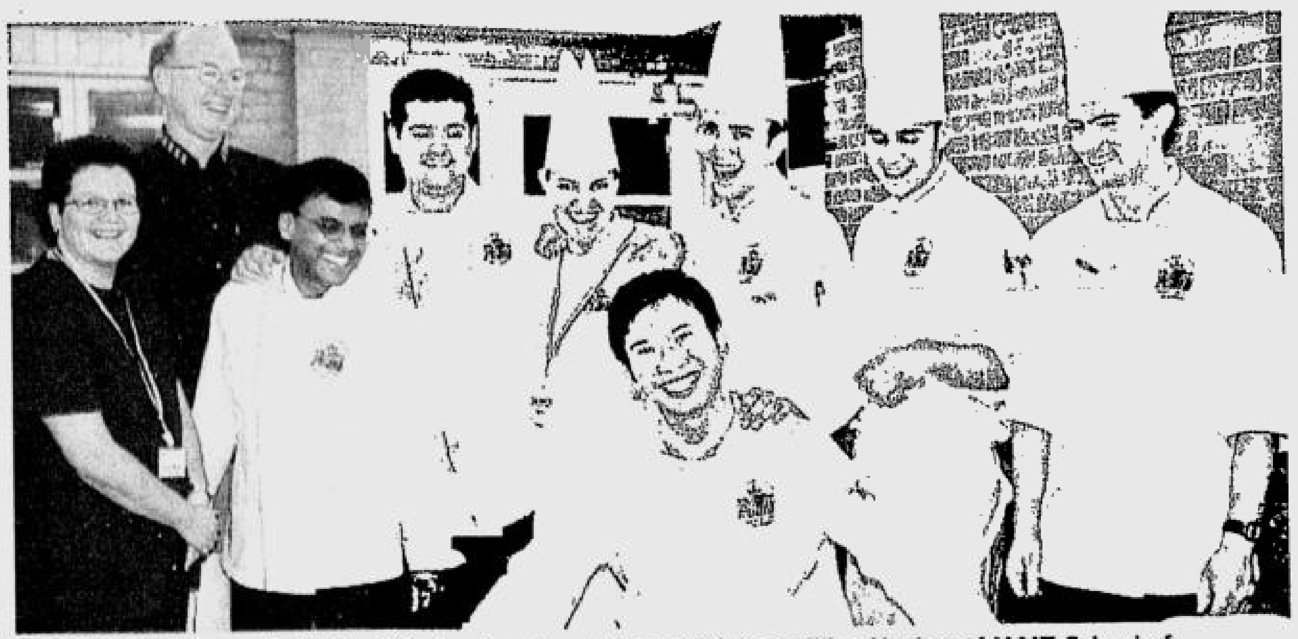
Talaga namang hanggang ngayon ay hahanap-hanapin mo pa rin ang sarap ng cheese, barbecue, at sour cream & chives ng Potato Corner. Meron pa bang iba?

The First and the Original Flavored French Fries

For inquiries, please call 534-5845

'Cooking is a team experience'

By Rowena C. Burgos
Photos by Mike Alquinto


NORTHERN Alberta Institute of Technology team: (from left) Dean Ellen Hughes of NAIT School of Hospitality; Conrad Lechelt, NAIT manager; Chef Vinod Varshney, Chef Nigel Webber, Dena Macroux, Andrew Fang, Matt Crawford, Todd Lindsay and Trevor Stayer

DENA Macroux demonstrates glazing of food.

UNLIKE other careers that depend mostly on sight and hearing, being a chef also requires one to use his senses of smell, taste and touch. A chef worth his toque delights in his multisensory task and, like many high-energy people who love pressure and a fast-paced environment, his creativity and passion for cooking are fired up even more in a busy kitchen.

This is what the culinary team of The Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT) in Canada showed the students of Center for Culinary Arts, Manila (CCA) last week.

Cooking is very creative. In a kitchen you find out what you're best at. You develop your own style. And you learn something new every day.

"This is why students have to practice, practice, practice every day. And get training from good instructors. You have to demonstrate lots of skills and unique techniques," said Conrad Lechelt, NAIT manager.

At the lectures and demonstrations held at the Cravings Center, Loyola Heights, Katipunan, QC, NAIT shared contemporary culinary wisdom with the CCA students.

"Everything must be perfectly clean. No finger prints. Stay off the ream of the plates. Prepare nice, natural-looking food. Don't make it look busy; keep it simple. No too-big portions. Food has to be colorful, but not too dark. It should be visually attractive. Don't cover food with too many spices or herbs. For glazed food, there should be no air bubbles and smudges," explained NAIT's chef Vinod Varshney (team manager).

Besides physical strength and the willingness to put up with minor physical problems like chapped hands, burns and cuts, cooks need good people skills, Lechelt says. Cooking is a team experience, he adds, with many players necessary to fulfill customer needs. It's almost always stressful. Customers don't care about kitchen problems. They just want a delicious meal served promptly. This means that chefs must be able to work under pressure and overlook the irritability of other team members who also are stressed.

"The job is physically demanding. So the number of years one has spent in a kitchen can help you determine what to do with the food, flavor combinations, variety and techniques. The more experience you have, the more skills and better techniques you acquire," Lechelt explained.

Over the years, food trends change. And simple ingredients can be transformed into a spectacular concoction merely by adding a few flavors. Aside from such wisdom, NAIT instructors also teach students culinary expertise that must be passed on to future generations.

MATT Crawford and Dena Macroux of NAIT show the proper way of glazing veggies and meat.

NAIT's visit to Manila was part of the team's training for Food Hotel Asia 2002 recently held in Singapore and an Asian culinary tour, which also included Malaysia and Thailand. They conducted a cooking demonstration for CCA students followed by a luncheon serving their preparation of an appetizer, main dish and dessert.

"We aim to show CCA students the kind of work we're doing in Canada and the food we cook for international competitions. Through the memorandum of cooperation signed by CCA and NAIT, we hope to have a stronger relationship with CCA, learn from each other and help improve the profession and develop programs," said Lechelt.

CCA has been affiliated with the NAIT School of Hospitality since its establishment in 1996. NAIT has consistently proven itself as one of the highest-ranking teams of chefs in the global culinary industry.

At the CCA-NAIT luncheon, Varshney, chef

COOKING/ p.D2

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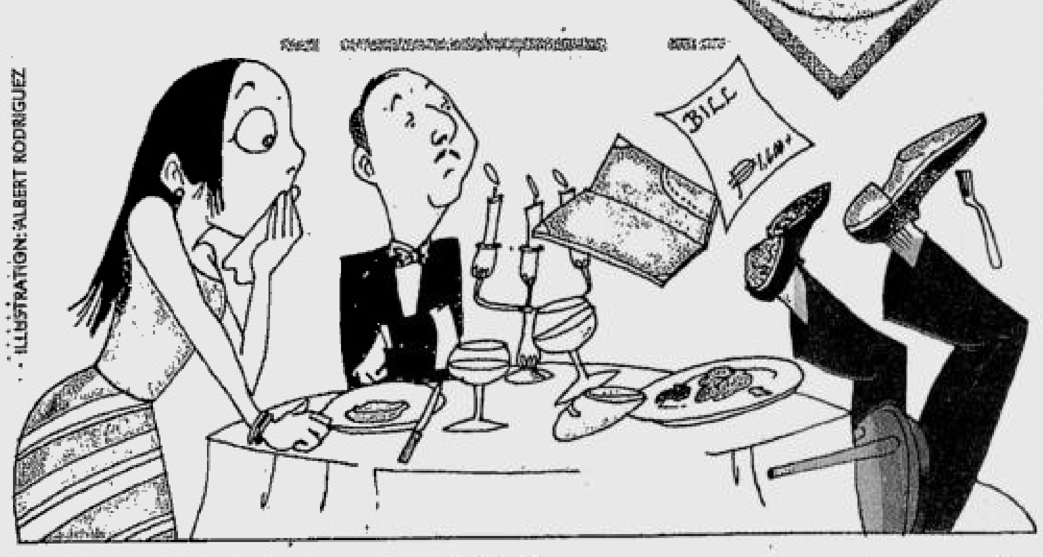

ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

The bill should be proportional to the dining experience

THE MAD TEA PARTY

Clinton Palanca

THERE is some controversy in my mind as to whether I have lost or gained weight from the three months that I spent in Paris. I would never do anything in the manner of stepping on a bathroom scale; and I loathe the way that I look so much that I flinch when I accidentally catch sight of myself in a shop window or reflective glass. There are some people, though, often to be found at cocktail parties or fashion launches, who have taken it upon themselves to be a kind of ambulant human version of those machines at the mall which will, for a few coins, announce your weight and horoscope reading for the day. They swoop down on you, examine you critically at arm's length, and then pronounce: "You've lost weight!" or "You've gained weight!" I received both assessments in equal amount, which leads me to believe that I am the obesity equivalent of those illusional drawings that are either a vase or two faces in silhouette.

> In Binondo you can still have a 10-course meal for under P400 a head; on Banawe, you can have duck stewed with ginger for P130

In answer to the obvious question, I do know for a fact that I ate a great deal in Paris, although I also walked a lot, often while carrying a large format camera and tripod, or faggots for the fire. I also went to London, where everything was so horrifyingly expensive that I could not bring myself to eat; and Prague, where they serve the same food at the train station cafeteria and the poshest restaurant, both nightmarishly terrible (their starch is a kind of steamed dumpling, which I can only imagine is made by putting flour and dishwater into a bag and then boiling it until there is a death in the family). Despite all the talk about how French food is not what it used to be, Paris is still one of the few places in the world where you can eat very well at all levels.

Eurobudget stuff

This distinction is important. Britain has undergone a culinary revolution, it is true, and London now has one of the most cosmopolitan palates: even the neighborhood Tesco's will have Asian, Italian and Middle Eastern ingredients; many excellent and innovative restaurants about; and most importantly, there has been a huge leap in the general consciousness about food. But all this comes at a price. On the lower end of the scale, there are the remnants of the good old pub grub, which is English food at its stodgiest but which can be oddly comforting (viz., meat pies, sausages and mash, etc.); and then the all-pervasive Eurobudget stuff: the ubiquitous shawarma, falafel and reheated pizza. Even the Chinese food is ridiculously overpriced and corrupted. The only meal when I didn't feel ripped-off was at McDonald's.

It may seem like a ludicrous comparison, but in the same way, I find that food in Manila is very expensive. Actually, everything in Manila is very expensive. The other night I took a friend out for dinner. She lives in Alabang, so this immediately means that at least P132 for four trips on the expressway to pick her up and take her home. Dinner at a restaurant

THE BILL/ p.E3

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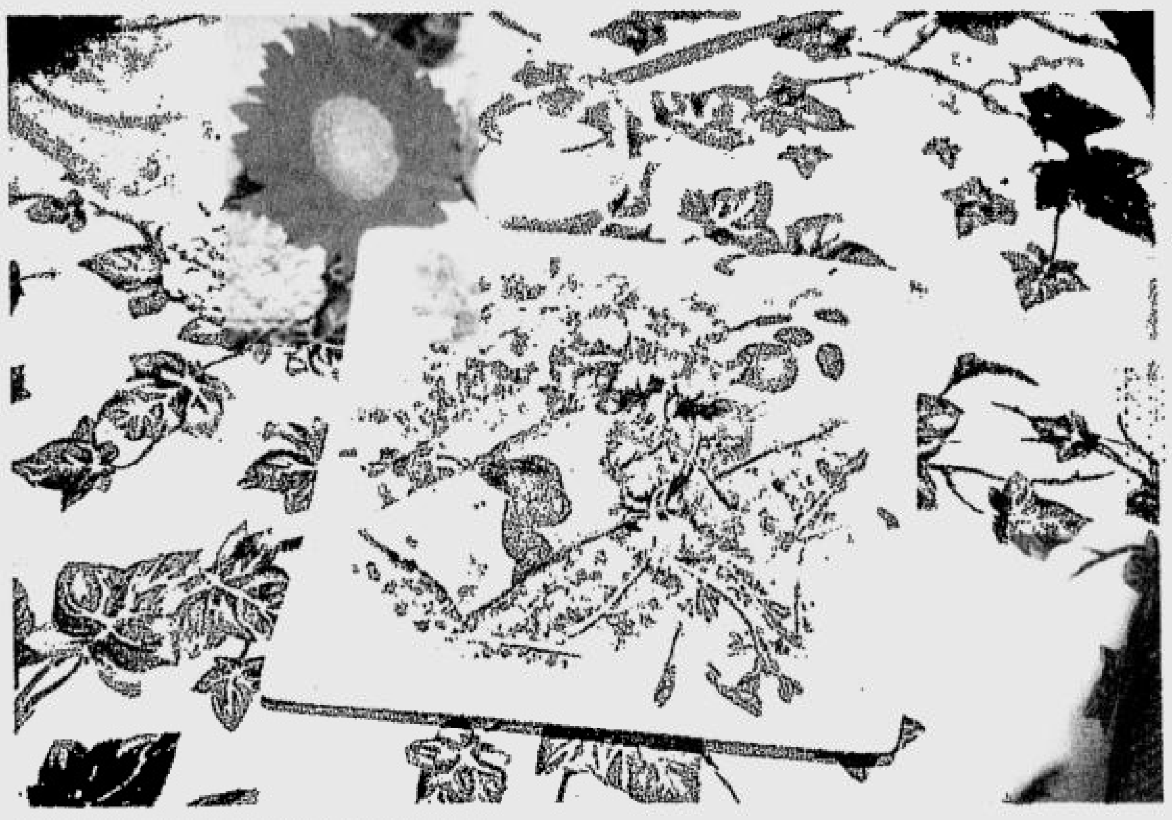
PASTEL de Pollo


PANDAN Lumpia with Candied Walnuts

Showcase of gourmet Filipino dishes

THE SAN Miguel Culinary Center recently held a special event titled "Entertaining in Style" with Reggie Aspiras, who cooked a menu of gourmet Filipino dishes, and Glenn Remorca, who demonstrated four centerpieces with different themes. "Entertaining in Style" was sponsored by Monterey, Magnolia Chicken, Purefoods-Hormel, Magnolia Butter and Magnolia Cheese. Raffle prizes and giveaways from Good Housekeeping, Tefal, Glad, La Germania and Petron Gasul were also distributed. Here are the recipes to help you recreate these dishes at home.

> Let Reggie Aspiras and Glenn Remorca show you how to cook with style

Bulalo Steak Printanier

3.5 kg Monterey beef shank, *kenchi* with *bulalo*, steak cut
1 whole leeks
1 carrot, peeled
1 onion, peeled
Peppercorns
Salt and pepper
Water enough to cover the meat

Sauce:
1/3 c Magnolia Butter
Flour
1 c dried shiitake mushroom, soaked in 1 c water
1 c onion
8 c broth or more
¼ c brown sauce
1/3 c chives
½ c each fresh button, shiitake and enoki/snow mushrooms
Fried garlic
Fried shallots
3 zucchini, grated with skin
2 carrots, peeled and grated

Roux:
2 tbsp Magnolia Butter
2 tbsp flour

Boil meat, together with the leeks, carrot, onion, peppercorns, salt and pepper until tender, at least three hours. Take off meat and arrange in a platter. Reserve the broth.

Mix 2 tbsp of butter and 2 tbsp of flour to form a paste (roux). In a pan, melt butter, add the flour. Add the mushroom and mushroom water, onion, garlic and broth (a cup at a time). Add the brown sauce. Bring to boil and thicken with roux. Add the chives and golden mushroom.

Pour sauce on top of beef shank. Garnish with fried garlic and shallots. Cover with grated carrots and zucchini.

BULALO Steak Printanier

Pandan Lumpia with Candied Walnuts

Lumpia wrapper:
1 c water
4 pc *pandan* leaves
2 whole eggs
1 c all-purpose flour
¼ c regular rice flour
¼ c milk
¼ c and 2 tbsp water
1 tsp salt
1 tsp chopped coriander (add last)
Malunggay leaves (add last)
Oil for brushing or spraying

Ubod filling:
1 kg *ubod* (grate in food processor)
1 tbsp each of sesame oil, olive oil, peanut oil
½ c chopped shallots
½ c chopped onions
1/3 c leeks, green part
1/3 c leeks, white part
¼ c chopped coriander
¼ c chopped chives
1 c sliced mushroom (shiitake, button, straw)
1 kg shelled shrimp preferably *suaje*
¼ c *togue* (straight)
1 tsp salt
1 tsp pepper
1 tbsp sugar
½ c water
½ bouillon cube

Candied walnut:
1 c sugar
2 tbsp water
1 c chopped walnuts
Chopped *wansoy*
Chopped chives
Sugar
Oil for brushing or spraying

Sauce:
1 tbsp each of sesame oil and peanut oil
2 tbsp or ¼ c chopped garlic
¼ c sugar
½ or 1 *siling labuyo*
1/3 c white vinegar
1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
1-2 tbsp sweet soy sauce
1 tbsp soy sauce
2 c water
Salt, pepper, sugar
2 tbsp cornstarch water

Combine water and *pandan* leaves in a blender or food processor. Purée and strain. Add the remaining ingredients. Whisk until smooth in consistency. Add coriander and *malunggay* leaves. Heat an 8" Teflon pan, spray with vegetable cooking spray. Pour ¼ c and cook until done. Set aside.

Heat pan, pour sesame oil, olive oil and peanut oil. Stir-fry shallots, garlic, leeks, coriander, chives, mushroom and shrimps. Cook until shrimps change color. Add additional oil. Add the *ubod* and *togue*. Season with salt, pepper and sugar according to taste. Add the water and bouillon or broth. Cook until done.

Caramelize sugar and water, add walnuts. Spray vegetable oil and spread mixture in baking pan. Chill until hard and chop in small pieces. Mix with *wansoy*, sugar and chives.

In a saucepan, heat oil and fry garlic until slightly brown. Add sugar and *siling labuyo*. Add the rest of the ingredients and season with salt, pepper and sugar according to taste. Thicken with cornstarch mixture.

Garnish with fried garlic slivers, fried shallots, *tom yao* and watercress.

Crispy Sotanghon Chips

2 tbsp fish sauce
2 tbsp dark soy sauce
4 *calamansi*, juice only
3 tbsp vinegar
4 tbsp brown sugar
Glass noodles, fried
4 eggs, lightly beaten made into egg nets
1 medium onion, finely diced
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 small red or green chili, seeded
1/3 c Monterey ground pork
1/3 c Monterey ground chicken breast
1/3 c ground shrimp
2 green onions, sliced for garnish
Lemon wedges for garnish
Oil for deep-frying

In a small bowl, combine fish sauce, soy sauce, *calamansi* juice, vinegar and sugar and set aside.

In a wok or deep skillet, heat oil to 350°F. Drop approximately an ounce of rice sticks into the oil. They will puff up and rise to the top of the oil in only a few seconds. Turn them over once and fry until crisp, about 15 seconds in all. Transfer finished noodles to a pan lined with paper towels and continue frying the batter in small batches. Keep noodles warm in a low oven.

Dip a hand in the beaten egg and holding your hand approximately 8 inches above the hot oil, drizzle egg over the surface in a random pattern. Continue with about half the egg mixture, forming a lacy network of egg.

Heat a second wok over medium high heat and add approximately 2 tbsp oil from the first wok. Add onion, garlic and chili and cook until they are fragrant. Add meat and stir-fry just until done.

Stir sugar mixture and add to wok. Bring to a boil and cook until slightly thickened. Reduce heat to low and add about a quarter of the fried noodles and eggs. Stir together and toss to break up noodle clumps and coat with sauce. Continue adding noodles and eggs in batches until all are coated with sauce. Transfer to serving platter and garnish with sliced green onion.

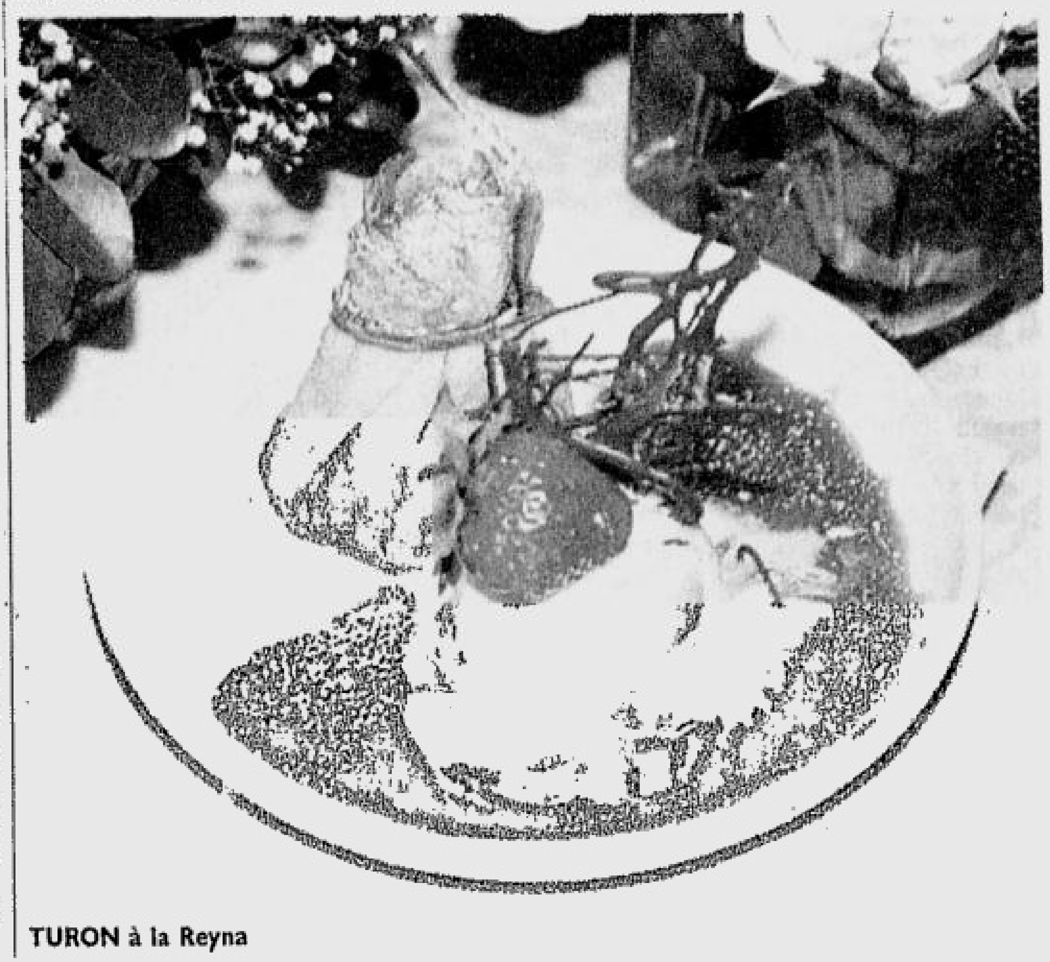
Pastel de Pollo

¼ c olive oil
½ c chopped garlic
½ c chopped shallots
4 pc chopped tomatoes
1 tsp tomato paste
¼ kg cubed slab Purefoods Honeycured Bacon
Pinch of saffron
1 pc Purefoods Chorizo de Bilbao
2 pc cubed potato
2 pc cubed carrots
½ c leeks, green part
½ c leeks, white part
1 kg ground chicken
1 c raisins
4 c broth
Salt and pepper
Fish sauce
2 pc cubed zucchini

Mashed potatoes:
1 kg boiled and mashed potato
½ c Magnolia Butter
½ c cream
¼ c chopped parsley
¼ c chives
1 tbsp garlic
2 tsp salt
1 tsp pepper
Puff pastry
Egg wash (egg with milk)
Coriander

Preheat oven to 400°F. Heat pan and pour olive oil. Fry garlic, shallots and tomatoes. Add bacon, saffron and *chorizo*. Cook until tomatoes are soft. Add tomato paste, potatoes, carrots, leeks, chicken and broth. Season with fish sauce, add more broth and add raisins and zucchini. Cook until done. Can be cooked ahead and stored in the refrigerator.

Boil potatoes and mash. Melt butter, add cream, parsley, chives, garlic, salt and pepper. When boiling, add the potato. Mix well. Top on meat mixture and layer with puff pastry. Brush with egg wash. Bake at 400°F until done. Top with fresh coriander leaves.


TURON à la Reyna

Lipton
Ice Tea
TATER'S Stadia and Lipton Ice Tea's FuntasTEAc Combos

Low-fat specialties at affordable prices

SUMMER means savoring the joys of watching a movie, no homework to think of, no deadlines to beat. It is enjoying a great movie with your cinema partner, Taters Stadia.

"Taters Stadia is the diversification of Taters into a full-service, casual resto-bar," says Annie Tanchanco, president of Taters, franchiser of Taters Stadia. "Here we provide a place for dining and hanging out before or after a movie or a concert, at lunch and dinner hours, or cocktails at any time of the day. The latest in music is also being played. Beer, wine and unique cocktails are available."

Stadia showcases baseball memorabilia and characters. Snacks are served in helmets and menu items are coined using popular baseball terms. Crew are dressed in sporty attire.

Moviegoers can have more fun this summer with Taters Stadia's FuntasTEAc Combos, which put together the most popular items sold in the restaurant at more affordable prices. Its low-fat house specialties include Turkey Ballpark Hotdogs, All-Turkey Burger, Brewer's Chili, All-Turkey Meat Loaf, Hungarian Turkey Sausage Hit and Chicken-Turkey Spaghetti.

The bill should be proportional to the dining experience

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that uses paper napkins added up to P1,600. We were unsatisfied with our food, so decided to cheer ourselves up with dessert and coffee at a hotel, which cost P700. Add to that miscellaneous items such as parking, tips and the valet chauffeur nicking a cigarette (yes, I'm one of those people who know how many sticks are left in the pack at any given time). So when I see some of my male friends who are dating models or socialites whisk them to dinner at hotel restaurants, have drinks before dinner, a bottle of wine with the meal, and then more drinks afterward, all I can say is, well, he'd better be getting some.

Value for money

Before you cry foul and exclaim that these are hotel restaurants, the equivalent of dining at Les Ambassadeurs or L'Espadon, let me throw out an even more incendiary contention: I think hotel restaurants give the best value for money in Manila. Especially in Makati, where there are only a handful of independent restaurants, almost all of which either cater to the office crowd (and thus have "everyday," repeatable items on the menu), or are hybrid bar/restaurant combinations, which means loud music and inane chatter if you eat any later than 9 o'clock. Hotel restaurants are subsidized by being part of a huge operation; for instance, napkins can be thrown in along with the hundreds of sheets that are laundered every day. Hotels also have an international name to protect, so they err on the side of caution and you are less likely to be served spoiled or dubious food.

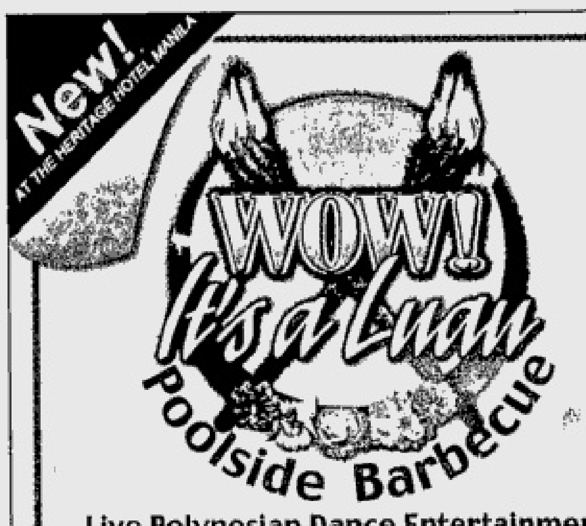
In the end, though, it's not a matter of numbers, but simply how you feel while paying the bill, or even trying not to recoil when you open the menu and see the prices and hope that she doesn't order the lobster. More and more, I find myself eating outside of Makati, Malate or Pasig. In Binondo you can still have a magnificent, tummy-bursting 10-course meal for under P400 a head. On Banawe, amid the car repair shops where they will go and steal other people's hubcaps for you, I had duck stewed with ginger, so tender it slid off the bone, for P130. These are numbers that make sense, especially in a country where you can buy a competently made and very up-to-style pair of women's shoes for P550. This is just slightly more expensive than a handful of leaves I had the other day that had been dipped in machine oil, called itself a salad, and cost P475.

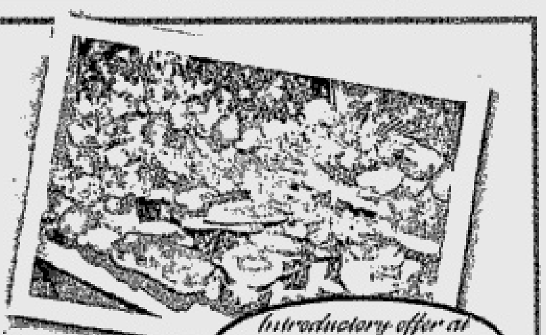
Every city will have its great restaurant, which will be predictably expensive but good; and in every country there will be cheap traditional peasant cooking. These can be taken as givens, and how good the best restaurant is or how meager the peasant's meal is correlative to the country's economy. But it is in the middle ground that the difference lies: from the quality of the chicken that the lower-middle-class housewife serves for dinner, to being able to say "Let's eat out tonight" and eating a good meal not in order to impress a date or celebrate an occasion, but simply enjoy satisfying food in congenial surroundings, and a bill that feels proportional to the dining experience that you had.

Paris has this. I am often identified as a Francophile, while I suppose I am; but I am also an incorrigible Filipino chauvinist. The French have good produce in the markets, have good coffee and bread everywhere you go, and excellent restaurants every five paces: not because they are culturally or even economically superior (France has one of the weakest economies among the European powers), but because of the importance that they put on food. An extreme example would be the bum in the doorway of our building: he stank and curled up inside a grimy duvet in the depth of winter; but he always had a bottle of wine beside him, and we noted that he was fond of good Bordeaux wines. I think he even had a Sauternes one day.

I may not have lost weight in Paris, but I suspect that I will in Manila. For this column, the money I receive will probably buy me a starter and a main course at a good restaurant. As for the other six days of the week left, I'll have to figure something out.

ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ





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PLDT

Summer seafood festival

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rant. Thien Duong Vietnamese restaurant offers a fusion of Vietnam and French flavors. Try its Chef's Special which features Tom Cha Gio (deep-fried prawn spring rolls with sweet and sour sauce), Cua Be (crabmeat and shiitake mushroom soup), Vit Chien (fried duck breast with lime sauce) and Muc Xao Rau (stir-fried squid with fresh chili). Dusit also offers Happy Hour at the Paulaner 5-7:30 p.m. Avail of 50-percent discount on Paulaner beer and all standard drinks. Call 867-3333 local 3301 to 3304.

CAFÉ ASTORIA offers Filipino favorites like *puto't dinuguan, ginataang mais at sago, mami at siopao, arroz caldo at tokwa't baboy, lumpiang prito at baboy, kakanin at bibingka* and *pancit palabok*. These *merienda* combos are priced at P65 per serving. Astoria Plaza is at J. Escriva Drive (formerly Amber Avenue), Ortigas Center, Pasig City. Call 687-1111.

EDSA SHANGRI-LA'S restaurants, Paparazzi, Garden Cafe and Inaho Tei offer seafood dishes. Paparazzi's Desiderio di Mare (Seafood Desire) features imported live Boston lobsters, tiger prawns, crabs, mussels, clams, complemented by aioli, tomato salsa, olive oil lemon, olive oil balsamico, salmoriglio, pesto dressings and lemon wedges. Inaho Tei's Toku Jyo Sashimi Moriawase (Shangri-La's De Luxe Assorted Sashimi) offers tuna fillet, yellow tail, prime tuna belly, Japanese scallops, sweet shrimps, clams, seaweed, salmon, grouper, and egg omelet. Panga at Tiyan ng Salmon sa Miso (Salmon Jaw and Belly in Miso Soup) at Garden Cafe is an East and West fusion of choice cuts of salmon. Available for lunch and dinner daily. Call 633-8888 local 2738 or 2739.

HOLIDAY INN Manila features carving specialties every Thursday night at Cafe Coquilla. Dine on Roast Beef Wellington with Gravy, Roast Rosemary Potato and Sauteed Carrot Vichyssoise; or Chicken Shawarma with Tahina Sauce and Garlic Mayonnaise and Baked Salmon Coulibiac with Caper Butter and Broccoli in Oyster Sauce. Call 526-1212 local 2318.

HARD ROCK Cafe introduces the latest price range and package of its daily lunch buffet. Open daily 11 a.m.-2 p.m., the buffet offers Filipino, Continental, Japanese, American and other Asian specialties. Food lovers can feast on Hard Rock's lunch buffet for P299++ for adults and P199++ for children 7 years old and below. The revised lunch buffet package goes with free flow of iced tea or soda. Call 893-4661 to -64.

THE HERITAGE Hotel Manila offers a Hawaiian banquet spread until May 31. Join the poolside barbecue with a twist on Friday and Saturday nights. Savor barbecue specials and a variety of buffet selections like Lobster Chips with Island Cocktail Dip, Suckling Pig, Flaming Tahitian Beef Brochette, Molokai Roast Pork with Peanut Butter Crust and Mango Flambé. Call 854-8888.

BLUE BACON and Green Eggs offers a special dinner for two. The meal starts off with Mediterranean Seafood Chowder soup. For the main course, there's Lobster Thermidor prepared the Blue Bacon way, served with Wild Rice and Parma Ham Risotto and Buttered Fresh Asparagus. To cap this meal, try Creme Brulee. Blue Bacon & Green Eggs is at 27 Lantana corner Boston Streets, New Manila, QC. Call 721-7666/2717 or 726-8054.

THE PENINSULA Manila's Spices Restaurant offers a taste of North India. Start your meal with Darjeeling tea followed with Rogan Josh Delhi (the king of lamb curries cooked using red Kashmiri chillies). Seafood lovers must try Lobster Korma (cinnamon, cloves, fennel, green and black cardamoms) which is perfect with fragrant cumin and clove-flavored basmati rice. The less adventurous can opt for Murgh Pasanda (breasts of chicken seared and simmered and enriched with almonds and cream). Vegetarians will love Paneer Lubaabdaar (homemade cottage cheese cooked with tomatoes, cream, fresh Indian herbs and cottage cheese) or Khile Phool (a rare delicacy of sculpted potatoes simmered in an aromatic yogurt gravy). Aside from feasting on traditional North Indian dishes, Kinara at Spices offers Indian food lovers the chance to attend a cooking class conducted by Chef Sandeep Ahluwalia. The cooking class is on May 18, 9 a.m.-12 nn at the Garcia Villa Room of The Peninsula Manila. Call 887-2888 local 2168 or 2956 (Spices) and 2236 or 2238.

MANDARIN ORIENTAL presents "Vegetarian Pleasures" at Tin Hau until May 5. The selection includes: Chinese cabbage rolled in shredded black and Japanese mushrooms and carrots; double-boiled cantaloupe soup with bamboo pith, lotus seeds and yellow fungus; crispy vegetarian duck with vegetables, seaweeds and Japanese shredded taro served with pancake; steamed vegetarian ham with dried lotus, red dates in honey sauce; pan-fried vegetarian fish with seaweed and Tao Bo wrapped with bean curd sheet in sweet and sour sauce; stir-fried vegetarian cuttlefish with vegetable in spicy sauce; braised monkey head mushroom with bamboo pith and green vegetarian oyster sauce; pan-fried vegetarian shrimp with corn, green peas and black mushroom; and chilled coconut cake with corn. Call 750-8888 local 2422/2424.

INAHO Tei at the Edsa Shangri-La offers tempura varieties May 13-June 9. Inaho Tei's chef Toshio Sato prepares Horse Mackerel, Sea Eel, Sea Urchin, Prawn Paste and Leek, Sesame Tofu, Oyster Rolled Salmon with Cheese, Rolled Chicken with Cod Roe, Cheese Sushi Roll, Lobster with Egg Yolk, Rolled Beef and Leek with Seaweed, Scallop and Yam with Grated Radish, Rolled Yam with Seaweed, and Assorted Fruit Tempura. Inaho Tei is at the Mezzanine of Edsa Shangri-La's Tower Wing. Call 633-8888.

MANILA GALLERIA SUITES offers a taste of South America. Sample Mexican favorites until May 10 at Manila Galleria Suites' Raphael Café-Restaurant. Relish Sabroso Picante Bean Soup, Avocado Ranch and Corn Chowder with Tomatoes, Chili Chimichangas, Pescado Viejo and Chilies Rellanos Casserole and Corn and Shrimp Moqueca.
To round up your meal, try Kahlua Flan, Corn Pudding and Sweet Avocado Squares. Call 633-711 local 7440/7416.

THE BAKAHAN at Manukan Restaurant offers a special *bulalo* from Batangas. It also has other specialties like Vaca Rib Steak charcoal broiled to perfection; the Mama Chit Special, a *bilao* of assorted fried seafood dishes; Maska Rancho, a meal for two consisting of *tawilis*/chicken/*bulalo* and rice. Ongoing is the Lechon Festival where one can avail of a 30-percent discount on all sizes. Located at the Ongpauco Building, P. Guevarra corner Wilson Streets, San Juan. There are two other restos at this site: Singing Cooks and Waiters, which is also on the ground floor while the Ihaw-Ihaw Gershwind will soon open on the second floor. Call 725-6748/6825.

GYUDON AND PORK BOWLS AT YOSHINOYA
Have a taste of traditional Japanese cooking at Yoshinoya, Japan's famous beef bowl, now open at SM Southmall. Yoshinoya offers big servings of rice bowls at affordable prices. Try the gyudon, a hefty serving of steaming rice topped with juicy beef slices cooked in a savory blend of herbs and spices. Shown above is the pork bowl.

"I made it!"

Angela received her diploma in Hotel and Restaurant Management at the I.H.M.E.S. International Hotel School of Southville Foreign Colleges. Now in the Isle of Man, UK, for her Advanced Diploma in Hotel and Tourism Management, she works part-time at the Hilton Isle of Man, before moving onto her paid practicum in one of the UK's top hotels. Talk about earning while you learn. Cool, isn't it?

That's because she believes that nowadays one needs global learning in order to succeed.

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Summer seafood festival

DINING OUT

THE RED Crab Restaurant presents the Ulang and Oysters Fest back to back with the Crab and Seafood Buffet. Try *ulang*, a unique delicacy. A parade of seven *ulang* recipes will be showcased—Singaporean Chili Style; steamed with Hollandaise sauce; grilled served with vegetables and lemon caper sauce; Thai Chili Style in red curry paste and coconut milk; Andaluz sautéed in olive oil, onions, native, chilies and garlic; Provençale sautéed in tomato basil and garlic sauce; herb-crusted in thyme butter served with basil pesto pasta. The Ulang and Oysters Fest also includes classic oyster recipes such as Hollandaise with spinach and Parmesan cheese; Szechuan style topped with julienne bell peppers; Oyster Ceviche in its natural exotic flavor; bruschetta in mushroom cream over pesto-flavored toast. Savor the famous crab cuisine and a wide array of seafood specialties. Kids 5 years and younger dine for free. The Ulang and Oysters Fest and Crab and Seafood Buffet is ongoing until June. Call 400-9979/80 (Malate), 371-6986 (Tomas Morato) or 772-2968 (Alabang Town Center).

ITALIANNI'S Restaurant has opened its doors at the G/F of the new Greenbelt Mall 2.

The menu includes pasta, seafood, beef, pork and pizza. House specialties are Spinach and Artichoke Formaggio, Penne Arrabiato, Angel Hair Pomodoro, Grilled Chicken Fettuccine, Roasted Chicken Italianni's, Grilled Salmon Oreganato. There are fresh-baked breads and pastries for dine-in and take out. New addition to the menu is the Roast Eggplant Penne (penne pasta tossed with basted eggplant and tomatoes in light chicken broth). Complementing these choices are specialty drinks, large cocktails, fresh fruit drinks, Italian and American wines. Sodas and iced tea come in free-refill servings.

LAS PAELLAS presents its Mucho Caliente summer lunch buffet until June 15. For only P295+, diners can enjoy a smorgasbord of appetizers, main courses and desserts, including your choice of iced tea or fresh fruit shake. The buffet includes: *rabas fritas* (deep-fried squid tentacles); various *croquetas, tortilla Española* (traditional Spanish potato omelet sprinkled with Parmesan cheese); *berenjanas primavera* (baked eggplant layered in mozzarella cheese topped with anchovies and pimientos), *callos à la Madrileña* (stewed ox tripe); *lengua Sevillana* (stewed ox tongue with mushrooms and olives in rich wine sauce); Paella Valenciana and Paella Negra; the famed *cochinillo asado* (oven-roasted suckling pig); and traditional Spanish desserts *canonigo* and *leche flan*. The lunch buffet also highlights Las Paellas baked oysters and clams and chef Roberto Pengson's eclairs, cream puffs and *yema*. The buffet is open 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

The summer buffet is available at Las Paellas Morato, 55 Timog Ave. corner T. Morato, QC. Call 371-4588 or 850-8824 or visit its Alabang branch at 6465 Alabang Zapote Road, Muntinlupa.

ALBA Restaurante Español in Quezon City offers a lunch buffet of traditional Spanish dishes. For only P350+, guests can enjoy an eat-all-you-can fare of Spanish dishes made from the original recipes of Don Anastacio de Alba and new culinary concoctions of chef Miguel de Alba. Regular offerings include Don Alba's Paella Valenciana (Valencian rice dish with chicken, pork, seafood and vegetables) and Cochinillo (tender oven-roasted suckling pig). Plus different kinds of Spanish desserts that include Canonigo and new cakes by Don Alba. Available Monday to Sunday, 11:30 a.m.-2 p.m. Alba Restaurante Español is at Tomas Morato corner Scout Lozano, QC, and at 38 Polaris St., Bel-Air, Makati City. Call 925-1912 and 411-7052 (QC) or 896-6950 to -51 and 890-4372 (Makati).

LOBSTER Thermidor served with Wild Rice and Parma Ham Risotto and Buttered Fresh Asparagus at Blue Bacon and Green Eggs

GYOZATEI Authentic Japanese Dumplings restaurant offers cold noodles, popularly known in Japan as the *hiyashi chuka*. Flavored with the distinctive sweet-and-sour *hiyashi* sauce, the cold-noodle preparation is made more special with toppings of roast pork (*chaschu*), dried seaweed (*wakame*), Japanese cucumber and fish cake. Located at Tomas Morato (corner Scout Madrigal), QC.

LUK YUEN Noodle House offers rice toppings of *asado* pork, soy chicken, beef brisket, *lapu-lapu* fillet with *ampalaya* and fried chicken. Recently, Luk Yuen introduced *tausi* spare ribs, chicken with black mushrooms and *tausi* spare ribs and chicken feet combination. All rice toppings are served in bowls with vegetable sidings. Other new dishes are steamed squid in garlic, beef tripe in satay sauce, crispy wanton surprise, fried udon with mixed seafood and steamed beancurd with minced shrimp. Luk Yuen is at Greenbelt 1 and Glorietta 2 in Ayala Center, Makati, Cash & Carry Makati, SM Megamall B Basement, Greenhills Shopping Center, and Makati Supermart in Alabang Town Center.

KIMPURA Japanese Restaurant introduces green roll, a sushi roll of flaked salmon, onions, cucumber and toasted sesame seeds sprinkled with chopped parsley. There's also *tofu den gaku*, tofu slices broiled with miso glaze; *shitake no ebi tsutsumi age*, deep-fried black forest mushrooms stuffed with chopped shrimps. The other new entrées are *suba yaki tempura mori*, brown buckwheat noodles sautéed with chicken chunks, vegetables and egg, and topped with shrimp tempura; cabbage roll *katsu*, lean porkloin, slices wrapped around finely chopped cabbage, breaded and deep fried in vegetable oil; teriyaki temaki, beef and chicken slices broiled with teriyaki glaze on rice, wrapped with crisp lettuce leaves; and seafood ramen, a medley of fresh egg noodles, garden greens, prawns, squid and fish cake in tasty broth. Kimpura is located at 2/L Glorietta 2, Ayala Center, Makati (tel. 893-2307, 892-4456) and Greenhills Shopping Center, San Juan (721-8816/8869).

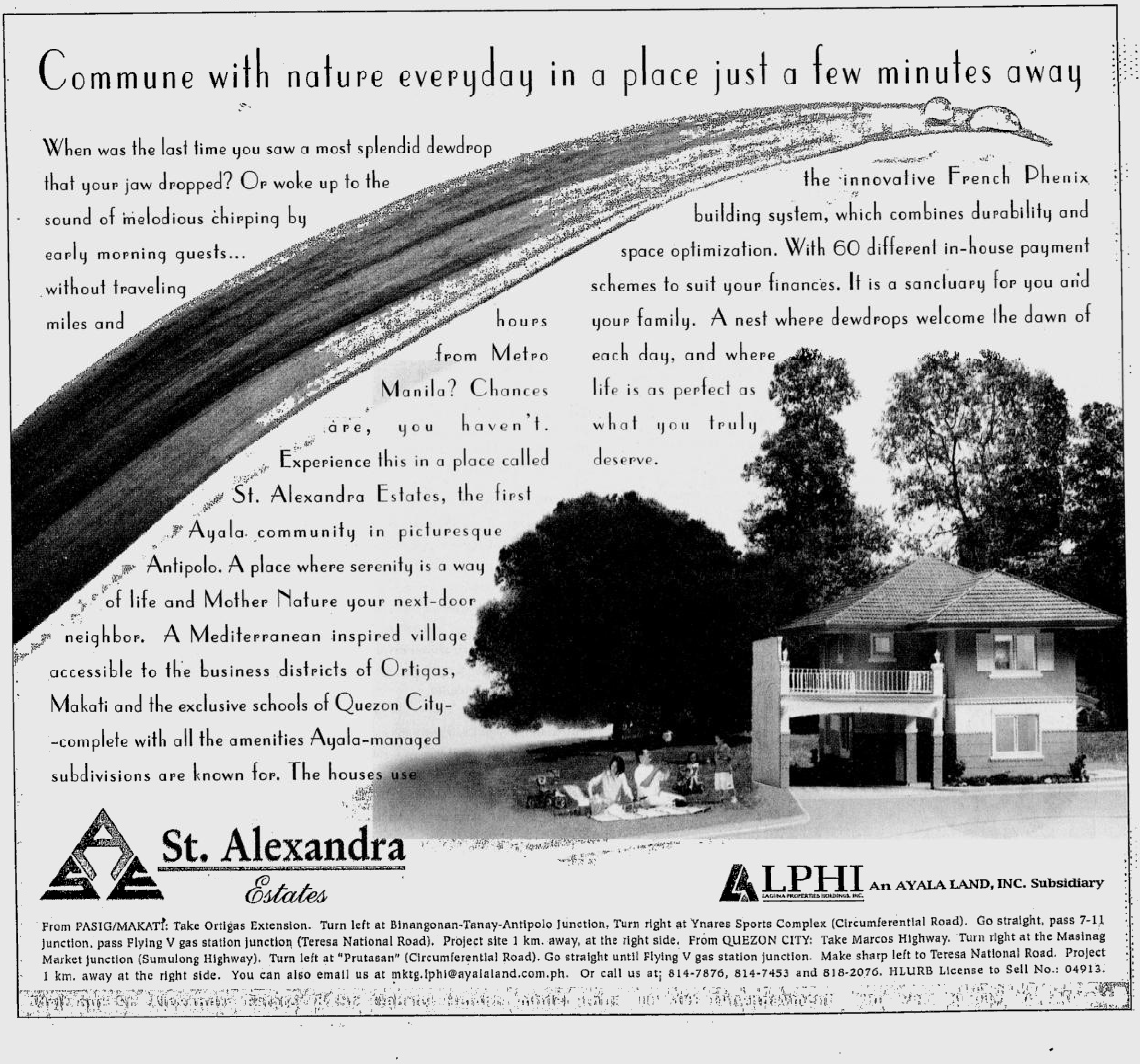
SBARRO Italian Eatery prepares meals and prizes for its valued guests. For a minimum purchase of P250 at any Sbarro outlet, guests will automatically receive a coupon. The coupon entitles him to prizes like tumblers, gift certificates from Worlds of Fun, and Coca-Cola drinks. You can claim your prizes only on the date of purchase. Valid for dine-in and take-out orders only. Sbarro is located at SM City North Edsa, SM Megamall A, Robinsons Place Manila, Glorietta 2 Ayala Center in Makati, and Festival Supermall in Alabang.

THE SULO Hotel's Guilin Chinese Restaurant offers a wide array of Cantonese delicacies. Its menu features Sautéed Scallop with XO Sauce and Asparagus, Fried Bijon Singapore Style and Baked Prawns with Salt and Pepper. House favorites are Guilin Fried Rice and Fried Seafood Salad Roll. The Sulo Hotel is on Matalino Road, Diliman, QC. Call 924-5051 to -71.

THE HERITAGE Hotel Manila offers "2+2=3" buffet treat at its Restaurant Riviera. This buffet package is good for a group of four, wherein one can dine for free at P680+ per person. The restaurant also offers Hainanese Chicken Rice and Roast Duck plus salads, appetizers, cakes and pastries. Fridays are for seafood lovers who can try the buffet stations. Promo runs until May 31. Call 854-8888.

DUSIT Hotel Nikko's Poolside Bar holds Summer Weekend Special on Thursdays and Fridays, 5-9 p.m. and Saturdays and Sundays, 2-9 p.m. Enjoy *halo-halo*, ice cream or fresh fruit juices. From 5-9 p.m., you can get a 50-percent off on all standard drinks on weekends. The Cafe offers a buffet spread of Asian and international cuisine. Try the Deli Shop's Snack Set. Business executives can sample Japanese cuisine at Benkay Japanese Restaurant. Have a Thai set lunch served Japanese style at the Benjarong Royal Thai restau-

SUMMER/ p.E3



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